THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

C. C. MARTINDALE

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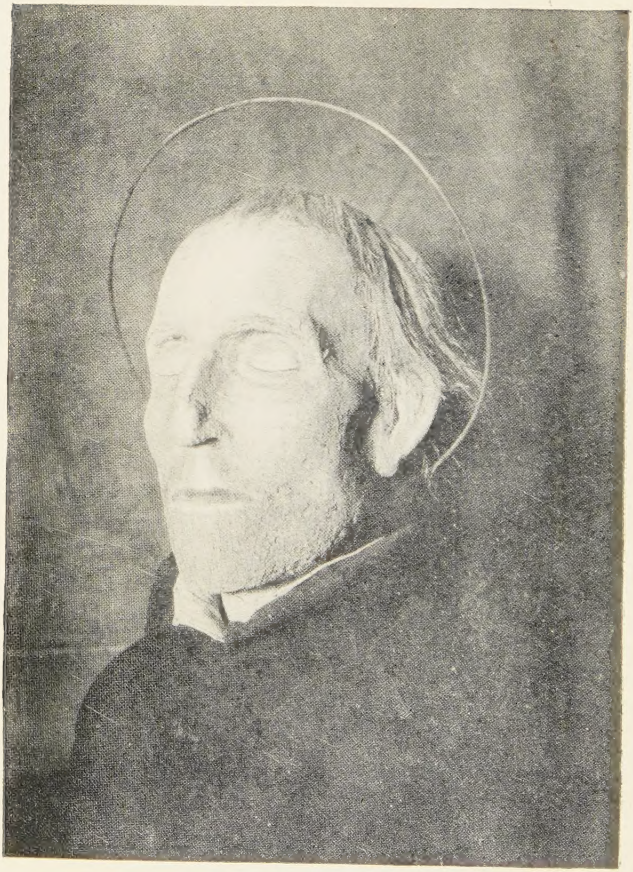
IN GOD'S ARMY

II.

CAPTAINS OF CHRIST



ST. FRANCIS BORGIA.

From a cast taken after death. The hair, ear, and halo were added later.

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IN GOD'S ARMY

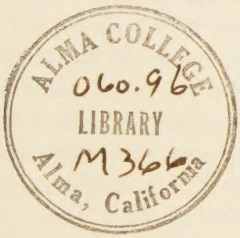
II.

CAPTAINS OF CHRIST

ST. FRANCIS BORGIA
ST. JOHN FRANCIS REGIS
ST. PETER CLAVER

BY

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.



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A LOUIS

C'EST dans la chapelle de St. Régis dans la noire cathédrale du Puy, Louis, que je me suis promis d'écrire quelques pages sur ce saint, assez oublié de nos jours, mais que je me figure—ah, bien malgré moi—un peu sous vos traits. N'allez pas trop vous flatter là-dessus: ce n'est pas de votre choix, après tout, que l'Ardèche soit votre pays, et que nécessairement j'associe dans ma pensée les noms de Régis, d'Aubenas, et le vôtre ! Pourtant, c'est bien à vous que je dois être reconnaissant de ce que le vif portrait du Saint se soit fixé dans mon imagination; et que même parmi les parfums du romarin, du thym sauvage, de la lavande et des chênes verts où nous causions, les austères montagnes du Vivarais se soient fait sentir; et que sous ce ciel ardent j'aie entrevu les neiges de La Louvesc. Et voilà qu'en me rappelant ainsi nos conversations d'il y a—combien d'années ? je me souviens encore quel culte était le vôtre pour Pierre Claver, tandis que moi je vous répétais qu'il fallait pourtant aimer un peu ce pauvre Borgia, qui

terrifiait tout le monde par son austérité mal comprise. (Ou étais-ce lui, enfin, qui comprenait encore mal, parfois, sa propre austérité ? Vous, qui me commentiez le *Dies Iræ* sous les lugubre platanes de la cour, vous devez savoir cela !) Enfin, les voilà tous les trois, en gage d'amitié envers vous que Notre Seigneur aime tant. Eh oui ! quelle ironie d'amour ! On vous avait chassé de votre pays parce que vous deviez tenir haut la Croix. Voilà que la guerre éclate. Vous rentrez. Vous combattez pour ce cher pays. Blessé une première fois—et combien gravement ! —vous vous hâtez, à peine guéri, à reprendre votre place dans les tranchées. Un obus vous emporte le bras. Que trouve-t-il, ce pays de France, à vous donner en récompense, si non sa Croix à elle? . . . La Croix de la Légion Honneur ? Vous auriez pu vous méfier d'une couronne; mais une croix vous pourrez porter sans peur, ce me semble, et même, avec une franche fierté. . . . *Oportet gloriari !* . . .

Priez donc pour moi, cher ami, quand, de la main qui vous reste, vous leverez, encore une fois, vers Dieu le céleste sacrifice. Qu'il l'accepte, et qu'il nous accepte, et nous mène *per suas semitas . . . quo tendimus, ad Lucem quam inhabitat.* Et cela aussi, vous vous en souvenez . . . ?

C. C. M.

NOTE

In the first volume of this series I have tried to explain that not "lives" of the saints were to be looked for there. "Interpretations," if you will; or, more and more I have come (not without humiliation) to feel, just "impressions." Not that this very modest claim—to have tried to set forth the "impression" these saints have left upon my individual imagination—is without its consolations. Thus, at least, nothing massive, nothing exhaustive, will be expected from these few pages. And everyone will feel himself at such full liberty to disagree! (For who is not at liberty to disagree with another man's impressions? and none should be offended if what he has felt be not what another man may feel.) Yet I will own readily that I have tried never to allow my imagination to outstrip, still less to *defy* the evidence; no single statement, I hope, has not its document. It was difficult to find anything satisfactory about St. Peter Claver; Fr. Höver's *Festgabe* for the canonization festivals of 1888 frankly adds

nothing to the ancient ill-controlled authorities. There is one good article in the *Stimmen aus Maria Laach;* and there is another small, quite modern brochure, I know, which I cannot now mark down. St. Francis Regis has for his latest biographer M. Joseph Vianey, who, in his short book, has made full use of modern methods and results, and corrects a number of errors hitherto current, adding, moreover, much historical information of a general but substantial character. This little book is at once scholarly and human, and noticeable even in the series *Les Saints* to which it belongs. For St. Francis Borgia, nothing further had to be sought than Fr. Suau's superb volume.

And all the while I have been wishing it might have been mine to study and portray those many subordinate officers in God's army —such as, for instance, Fr. Antonio Ruiz de Mendoza, whose work lay in Paraguay; the predecessors of John de Britto in India; the missioners of China, whose glorious lives are known to few, perhaps, save students. And I have been unable to forget that multitudes of humble "privates," who are not known at all, but whose drudgery—or indeed sensational heroism—made possible the successes of their chiefs. But I suppose that it is not for nothing that certain men are canonized. It is they,

no doubt, whom we *ought* to know. And the adequate picturing of their obscurer brethren would demand an equipment which is certainly not mine.

Acknowledging, then, that in all this district I stand on holy ground, I pay homage to these great names, to the less-known names, and to the nameless; invoking prayers which cannot but be powerful for their successors in the never-finishing campaign.

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IN GOD'S ARMY

II.

CAPTAINS OF CHRIST

ST. FRANCIS DE BORJA Y ARAGON
1510—1572

ST. JOHN FRANCIS REGIS
1597—1640

ST. PETER CLAVER
1581—1654

ST. FRANCIS DE BORJA Y ARAGON

1510—1572

JESUIT-IN-DISGUISE, his bony finger ever in the political pie, a brooding and merciless ascetic, a sort of sinister Aramis among his fellows, Francis Borgia, Duke of Gandia and General of the Jesuits, has been more calumniated than any saint save perhaps St. Aloysius, though less contemptuously than he. More too than any saint, perhaps, he has been absolved by laborious investigation and discovery of many documents—piles of correspondence, for instance; for these completely reverse the accounts given of his life as Marquis of Lombay and Duke of Gandia by men who relied on hearsay for such facts as they believed themselves to be embedding in their moralizing biographies. In consequence, I have felt it right to assign a greater part to narrative and less to comment in this, than in the other studies of this series. I have left it, too, absolutely imperative to add some details, disconcerting perhaps and

even not too edifying, which explain the background, tradition, prejudices and environment in which Francis Borgia grew up. In the case of a Spanish Grandee of the early sixteenth century these were of colossal power and inevitable in many of their consequences. . . . Alike in his submission to them, and in his emancipation from them, Borgia is of supreme interest. All chance of understanding him, and most, perhaps, of ever loving him, disappear if we imagine him a citizen, as it were, of our own age, or detached from any age, a figure isolated in the history of things or thoughts. I have tried then neither to shock nor to edify, feeling sure that one moment's true contact with this great soul will work, spontaneously, the best of edifications, while if much in his "period" grieves us, well, perhaps that is precisely what it should do. But even periods have the right to claim that we should reserve full judgment till we are sure we understand them.

I have felt that it would be an affectation to discard the Italianized *Borgia* for the true form of his family name, *Borja*.

I.

THE COURTIER

"If you can talk with crowds nor lose your virtue,
And walk with kings nor lose the common touch,
If neither loving friend nor foe can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much. . . ."

R. KIPLING.

ADAM, Hercules, Æneas and Julius Cæsar were ancestors on whom the pedigree of the Emperor Charles V. plumed itself. And in the Spain of his day, and earlier, every family of splendour felt it imperative to be attached, as branch, to some royal, if not heroic or even patriarchic trunk. The overwhelming splendour of the Borgia clan, natives of a little town in northern Spain named Borja,* caused them, in the fifteenth century, to claim descent from a certain Pedro Atarès, to whom Alfonso I. of Aragon had given it on its recapture from the Moors in 1120. Now Pedro Atarès was, by

* It lies on the south of the Ebro, almost in that northernmost Spain of Ignatius and of Xavier, close to the frontiers of Aragon, Castille, and Navarre.

the help of a bâton sinister, great-grandson of King Ramiro I. In this way, when Roderigo de Borja, Pope Alexander VI., wished to marry his daughter Lucrezia to the Duke of Ferrara, he was able to assure that potentate of his own descent from kings.

The real glories of the family began with Alfonso de Borja, that master of international diplomacy who in 1455 became Callixtus III. He was a great sovereign, and notably furthered art, science, and even religion; and though he failed to evict Mohammed II. from Constantinople which the Turk had captured, to his delight at the victory of Hunyadi at Belgrade in 1456 we owe the feast of the Transfiguration. His nepotism was fantastic, even for that age, and the Borgia fortunes flourished unimaginably. On Roderigo de Borja, son of his sister Isabella and their cousin Jofre, he heaped benefice upon benefice. Roderigo, Cardinal at twenty-four, Bishop of Valencia at twenty-seven, of Albino and Porto at thirty-seven, was ordained at forty-five, and during four Pontificates was the most brilliant of the Sacred College. In 1492 he was elected Pope as Alexander VI. His eldest son, Pedro Luis, was in 1485 created hereditary Duke of Gandia, of which he had bought the territory, and there he was buried. His half-brother Juan succeeded him, and

married his widow,* and after a career of much crime, incompetence, and splendour was assassinated in Rome, though probably not by his brother Cæsar Borgia whom the Gandia Borgias considered guilty, nor yet by his brother-in-law, Giovanni Sforza, on whom, also, suspicion chiefly fell. Through the unfortunate girl, Maria Enriquez de Luna, whom he thus left a widow, perhaps for the second time, at eighteen, sanctity entered the Borgia family, gravely to disconcert and glorify it. To her son Juan, the third Duke, she bequeathed an estate enormously improved, and something of her own instinct for virtue. When he was fifteen, she married him to Doña Juana of Aragon, daughter of Alfonso, and granddaughter of Ferdinand V., King of Aragon. Juan and Juana became the parents of St. Francis, who did through his mother, then, undoubtedly inherit the supremely-prized Blood Royal—singularly diluted, it is true, since Juana was an illegitimate daughter of Alfonso, who was appointed Archbishop of Saragossa at nine, and ordained priest at thirty-two, on which day he celebrated the

* That is, if Pedro's marriage had been officially celebrated, which is doubtful, and must anyhow have been by proxy. The Duke was in Rome when he died; his bride was in Spain, aged eight.

only Mass of his life. Moreover, Alfonso was himself an illegitimate son of Ferdinand. Of this bizarre background the Borgias were very far from ashamed, and profited by it at every turn, and its consequences in the life of St. Francis are discernible and important. No sooner was Juan safely married, and the father of two children, than the Dowager Duchess became a Poor Clare at Gandia, where she found herself ruled by her own daughter Isabel, already Abbess.* Mother and daughter helped one another to become saints, the elder woman, at least, understanding what the Borgias had to expiate.

Into a court thus fragrant with the virtues of Maria and Isabel, was born on October 28, 1510, Juan's eldest son, Francis, one of whose great-grandfathers, Ferdinand, was still king in Spain, while the other, Alexander, had been dead seven years.†

Which heredity was to conquer in Don

* Isabel, in religion Sister Francis of Jesus, had an exquisite personality. Still a child, she was listening to the tale of gorgeous marriages suggested to her by her brother Juan. They were in the garden. "I can have for lover," she replied, "Him only who made these flowers." Her life was one long fidelity to this love.

† Juan had seven children by his first wife and ten by his second, also a natural son, John Christopher, whom Francis, he willed, was to treat as a brother.

Francis ? The Duchess chose his tutor, an ecclesiastic, and the little boy grew pietistic. The Duke was annoyed. "Get rid of your altars, boy," he grumbled, and naïvely added, "King Ferdinand had no use for altars!" Even the Duchess was anxious. "Ride, Francis, and fight," she urged. "I asked God for a soldier, not a monk." His grandmother and his aunt went their way, too; and at the convent Francis became a pet, and preached little sermons. However, he displayed much aptitude, and soon talked two or three languages, was good at fencing and riding, no fool at his books, and quite something of a musician. Indeed, he developed a passionate taste for sport of all kinds. His falcons were famous; and years afterwards, as a Jesuit, he would stop to look at birds which his companion could scarcely see, and explain what they were, their habits, and how they must be chased. His musical instinct revealed itself most, as was proper, when he fell in love and after his marriage. His voice was to be highly admired at Court, and he was to compose much Church music to replace the often quite scandalous work of that period.*

* Flemish masters made Masses for Charles V. out of his favourite song-tunes: *Baise-moi, ma mye : De la bataille écoutez.* . . . A mass for 4 voices, and

When he was ten his mother died, and he was himself almost lost in a popular rebellion, the *Germania* or Brotherhood of artisans and common folk leagued against the nobles. Viceroy, Duke and royal army fled; the palace of Gandia was sacked. Francis was carried off by his tutor just in time for their horse to reach the sea. They sailed to Peniscola. On all sides relatives clamoured that the heir should be trusted to their keeping. Francis with his youngest sister Luisa were sent to their maternal grandmother Anna de Gurrea. To Doña Maria de Luna, the Duke despatched his mother and his sister, the two Poor Clares; and Francis found thus his family broken up, never to be reconstituted. In fact, he rarely saw his father again.

An entirely new orientation was offered to Francis at the Court of his uncle Don Juan of Aragon, son of Doña Anna, who, like his younger brother, succeeded his father on the Archiepiscopal throne of Saragossa. He remained pious, however; and everyone was

8 motets, almost certainly by Borgia, have been found and are still performed. The motets form an *auto-sacramental*, or musical dialogue in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, sung at the Poor Clares' at Gandia. Flemish influence is said to be here diminished; the fugues are full of spirit, and the counterpoint scientific and complicated.

dumb, or, rather, talkative, with astonishment at the sight of this grandnephew of a Cæsar and Lucrezia Borgia whose innocence was surviving in this Court. He left it soon, however, for Doña Maria's, his great-grandmother's, at Baza. Maria and the two nuns were eager to see him, she, before she died, they, before returning to their convent. Francis came, but fell ill; in his mid-illness an earthquake ruined half the town; the boy was carried into a field; an awning was put up, and for forty days he did an "open-air cure."

But his career became of urgent import. The Duke and the Archbishop obtained for him, as first step in a ladder of destined triumphs, a post as page to the Infanta Caterina, who lived with her mother Juana, the mad Queen, at Tordesillas, in Castille. This separated him from Luisa, whom he loved dearly, though she was only three, and he was, for the first time, quite alone. Of all his intermediate children, the Duke, with disastrous piety, had made priests or nuns: Maria, Anna, and Isabel entering the Poor Clares at eleven, six, and two or three, respectively. The only child whose vocation seemed genuine was Luisa; but, helped by the advice of the Duke and of Francis himself, her aunt, Duchess of Medina Sidonia, married her to Martin de

Gurrea, afterwards Duke of Villahermosa. She became known as "the holy Duchess," by the time Francis himself had been transformed into "the holy Duke." Such, in outline, was the fate of this bizarre branch of the Borgias.

In 1525, the Infanta was to marry Juan III. of Portugal and wished to take Francis, now fifteen, to her court. The Duke refused to let him leave Spain, sowing thus seeds of an enmity destined to revolutionize his son's career. The boy returned to Saragossa, and spent two years there in study. But he had developed a taste for Royalties and was restless. His father, an obstinately territorial potentate, detested court life; but consented to ask for Francis—as well he might, being one of the twenty Grandees of the First Class and "cousin of the king"—a post at the court of Valladolid.

In 1527 Charles V.'s fortunes smiled unclouded and Valladolid was at its most resplendent. Providence, at its hours, engineers strange encounters. Francis, early in 1528, on his way to the most dazzling and flattering of worlds, passed, in Alcalà, a melancholy little group. An unlucky wretch, shabby-clad, yet refined of feature, was being dragged to an Inquisition prison. Francis halted his brilliant

caravan to look. . . . It was explained to him that this was Iñigo of Loyola, a heretic or madman. . . .

Francis was seventeen and the Emperor twenty-seven. A unique friendship sprang up between the two. The court stood amazed and almost scandalized, and Francis was equally exposed to flattery and jealousy. He succumbed to neither. His whole interest in life appeared to be, for the moment, sport. His horses were magnificent, and in every kind of horsemanship he was recognized as unequalled. A doubtful and partial exception was made in favour of the Emperor.

In 1529 Charles, about to leave for coronation by the Pope at Bologna, gave the Empress permission to choose a husband for her favourite maid of honour, Eleanora de Castro. She fixed on Francis. The Emperor hesitated. Eleanora was from Portugal: the Aragonese were sensitive: would the Duke consent? Gandia, as a matter of fact, refused, and positively snubbed the Emperor. He thanked him, but would find a quite suitable bride for his son, here in Spain. . . . Luckily Francis had fallen into genuine love with Eleanora. "My father," said he to Charles, "is an obstinate man. Nothing will get him out of Gandia. Summon him to court, to discuss the

marriage, and rather than come, he will consent to it." The wise youth proved right, and the marriage was duly celebrated. Francis's barony of Lombay was raised to a Marquisate; he was appointed Chief Venerer to the Emperor and Chief Equerry to the Empress, and revenues flowed into his coffers. His position was of an astounding familiarity: he could use private staircases and come and go unannounced. No wonder Spanish imagination devised a legend, tenacious and still repeated, that Francis cherished a passionate yet innocent devotion to the Empress. . . . But his star rose and rose, and no cloud of sin or even scandal dimmed it. He was not yet twenty years old!

To this period he looked back as the happiest of his life. The Empress and Prince Philip of Spain, then three, stood godparents to his first son, called Carlos after the Emperor. Philip adored Francis, and screamed if he were taken from his arms; and owing to the intimate friendship which grew up between the two little boys, Borgia nearly found himself, later on, established at the court of Mary Tudor.

Time went by. After the triumphant festivities of 1533, Francis fell gravely ill and remained seriously weakened. Emperor and Empress were constant at his side, visiting him by a covered passage joining their palace

to the favourite's house. For all that, convalescence proved dull, and romances, to his peculiar taste, still duller. He dipped into the New Testament and perhaps St. Chrysostom, though not till six years later did he begin, as Polanco says, "courageously to take up reading, prayer, and even mortification." His real study just now was mathematics, for which Charles developed a craze. These they worked at together, with great eagerness; also geography and military science. These stood Francis in good stead when he was Viceroy. But he hoped for a speedier chance to practise them. Charles, alarmed by the activity of Barbarossa, sailed to attack Tunis. Francis, ready to accompany him, was, to his extreme disgust, sent home to attend the Empress. Madrid was a dirty and unhealthy town; the July heat was appalling: the young man's letters, now, are depressed to the verge of despondency. He watches himself and his five children falling sick: he loathes his life. In 1536, however, he rejoined Charles and shared in his Provence campaign. Farce was mingled with tragedy. The young Marquis had already, it is sad to say, grown very fat. Charles, on the scorching journey to Provence, ordered his drenched companion to ride without his armour. He obeyed, but felt humiliated. He was the con-

stant theme of jests, and had not yet learnt to laugh at his own *barriga*. The campaign was disastrous. During the retreat Borgia lost his best friend, the poet-soldier Garcilaso de Veza. Still, he had had the consolation of leaping into the moat of the town Veza was attacking, and himself carried out on his shoulders the dying officer. . . .

At court, Francis went from strength to strength, his income being immensely increased from the revenues of three vacant bishoprics. But the first great blow of his life now fell, striking indeed his wife more directly than himself, though in his career too it proved a crisis. On May 1, 1539, the Empress died, after a few days' illness, in the midst of the superb celebration of the opening of the Cortes at Toledo. The dying woman had ordered that alone the Marchioness should prepare her for burial, while Borgia was to escort her coffin to Granada. The Emperor plunged into retreat; and the dismal fortnight's journey began. At Granada, all the officials had to inspect, through an opening in the double coffin, and identify the corpse. Behind the clouded glass the dimmed features can have been barely visible, but the ceremony was merely formal; no one doubted who was being laid among the crowded coffins of the vault.

By the death of the Empress, Francis Borgia, his wife and her sister found themselves deprived of almost all their posts at court, and they felt that anyhow they could not return thither after the loss of so dear a friend. In a month's time the Emperor appointed Francis his Viceroy in Catalonia, and he passes definitely into the second and far more responsible phase of his career. It cannot be too emphatically recalled that no sensational conversion such as painters, preachers and panegyrists called historians describe, took place when Francis looked into the Empress's coffin. Polanco, in his journal, and Borgia in his own spiritual diary, do not even mention the episode of the vault, but again and again recall the 1st of May, the Empress's death-day, as what did indeed alter the current of his career and put a natural stop to his courtier life. Indeed, at this time Francis neither spoke nor thought of any conversion, nor needed any, nor, humanly speaking, was capable of any. His was the thoroughly realist religion of the normal Spaniard. He accepted without hesitation the existing scheme of things. God was as real to him as the Emperor, and the way of serving each was as clear, objectively speaking, as daylight. The difference between him and his fellow-men was that he vigorously chose

to observe the rules in each case. That sort of man does not blink facts and is not in the least put out by them. Money matters, family matters, the delinquencies of nobles, nuns, or bishops, health, trivial incidents, international questions, truths of theology and dictates of etiquette, occur to him, and are alluded to by him, as obvious facts, all on much the same plane of reality. There was nothing superficial in this. Quite the contrary. To "see life steadily and see it whole" is, if action be proportionate to vision, the best way to learn to see it deeply and to act more potently. Francis in his behaviour was minutely loyal to what he saw, and consequently each day impressed upon himself a deeper character. It is true that the time had now come for a change of environment. The death of the Empress shocked him into no radical conversion, but to leave court was a necessary condition of his further and rapid development.

II.

THE VICEROY

"Force not the current of the river:
Lay not thyself down for a fool to tread upon;
And accept not the person of one that is mighty.
Strive for the truth unto death,
And the Lord God shall fight for thee."

ECCLESIASTICUS iv. 26.

BEFORE he left for Catalonia, Borgia spent long days closeted with Charles, who prepared, too, a lengthy memorandum for the guidance of the new Viceroy. That a man's diplomatic career should begin in this way was unheard of. Catalonia was France's key to Spain; its governorship led to Naples, Sicily or Flanders, and should have been held after that, say, of Valencia or Majorca. In itself, too, the province threatened him a stormy future. Nobles, secular and ecclesiastic, behaved as they chose and still resented the increased centralization of power. Brigandage went unbridled, and maladministration of justice was normal. Borgia naturally had come to hold the dogma of centralization and of Imperial

absolutism to be the corner-stone of government; and no Pliny writing to his Trajan could have been more minute and scrupulous than he. Much of this enormous correspondence has survived, and enables historians to reconstruct this period of his life. It is, as I said, astoundingly full, and a rather startling mixture of rigid convention and vivacious personality; the former expressing itself in elaborate circumlocution and pomp of style, the latter, by a thousand flashes of picturesque detail, of temper, of proverbial wit, and shrewd philosophy, and of downright slang. Throughout it, too, recur the name of God and religious turns of speech, exactly as in other correspondence of the period, yet not because Borgia was yielding herein to mere etiquette or custom, but because, as I said, God and His will were as real to him as the Emperor and his orders, or Catalonia and its special difficulties; and they were to be, not brooded over, or "sentimentalized," but reckoned with as indisputable factors in the total resultant of life's forces. To these characteristics of his letters I would add a marked *bonhomie*, as I can only call it, which will mellow, as he ages, into a constant kindliness; and finally a pervasive dignity as of a truly great nobleman, singularly sure of himself, and finding it unnecessary as well as

utterly distasteful, to boast or bully. This too survives, purified and loftier still, when Borgia's pre-eminence has become more spiritual. Courtliness, fire, geniality and true distinction are then the elements which seem to me to make up the spirit of Borgia's letters.

It would be ridiculous to catalogue the doings of an exceptionally zealous Viceroy during a space of over three years. What I mention is meant but to illustrate what was substantial and permanent in him, and what must be assumed to survive, in a higher form, in the Saint-to-be.

Borgia's household now consisted of himself, his wife and her sister, his eight children and their governess. His expenses were, then, bound to be enormous; his revenues were not large, his salary much diminished by his exit from court sinecures. The financial state of the province was discouraging, and Borgia would not recoup by extortion or by taking bribes. He appealed, however, constantly and unhesitatingly to the Emperor, until his family and his province should be on what he judged a sound financial basis. A cynic might sneer at the tenacity, not to say rapacity, displayed by all these great Spaniards in the matter of money, and at the amazing lawsuits in which they naturally found themselves involved.

Francis fought his own stepmother for years; even the marriage contracts of his sons, though drawn up with precautions more appropriate, one would have thought, to agreements between belligerent states, involved his heir in ruinous suits. Meanwhile, ready to spend magnificently, he was resolved to do so from full coffers. He appeals with instance to Emperor and ministers. To his great friend the minister Don Francisco de los Cobos he points out that a certain abbacy is vacant: "It brings in 5 to 600 pounds," he writes, "and I have no lack of sons to whom His Majesty might do a favour." The see of Cordova too is vacant, "and, daily, ecclesiastical property becomes available from which His Majesty might draw something to my advantage—my sons' or mine, for it's the same thing." But he was, in reality, disinterested, and knew that no bureaucracy will remain incorrupt, unless it is thoroughly well paid. That is a sound principle of government. Moreover, he was no respecter of personages. In 1540 the Bishop of Barcelona*—a great patron of brigandage and a notorious gambler: gambling was a vice

* Suffragan since 1520, titular since 1531, ordained (to the Emperor's satisfaction: he congratulated Borgia) in 1541; he died in 1546, after celebrating his first Mass.

especially abhorred by Borgia—was constantly attacked by the Viceroy for these faults. "If His Majesty would order the Bishop to be consecrated and use in doing his duty the time he wastes in gambling, his conscience would be singularly lighter. It should be heavy enough already for ever having appointed him." And again, "My conscience," he wrote to Cobos, "forces me to mention this. . . . It is absolutely certain that if His Majesty had not squandered the moneys left him by the Queen, there would never have been 300 deaths at Castelbo. This in my view lies heavy on His Majesty's conscience. And if the deaths are not to be 3,000, and His Majesty's conscience to be far worse burdened—well, means must be taken. . . ." "What is the good of my breaking my head with writing out memorials and signing documents, if every single coin remains shut up in the treasury ?" *

* The most startling action, perhaps, of St. Francis occurred when he was assuring a competence to his younger sons, left practically poor men by the exorbitant rights of primogeniture which he scrupulously respected. John Duke of Camerino and Nepi was a son of Alexander VI. and therefore a distant relative. He died in 1549 intestate, and his goods in the kingdom of Valencia passed legally to charitable works. Francis, then Duke, petitioned Paul III. to divert them to his sons. "Unless Your Holiness

A sound financial basis, then, is sought for the province. Next, it must be defended. The Viceroy keeps a sharp look-out towards France and Africa. Barcelona especially lies exposed. He builds it a harbour; remodels its fortifications; mounts guns; begins to form a fleet. (And, as background, what intrigues and jealousies! "Everyone wanted to be Admiral. . . ." Noble fights with noble, bishop with bishop; no sooner has the Viceroy healed a quarrel here, than it breaks out there.) The prisons were appalling; he visited and reformed them, striving, once, to mitigate the law which ordered, in certain cases, amputation of a hand. "Let it be a foot," he begs. "That is less permanently incapacitating." Above all, brigandage, everywhere rampant, must be suppressed, and appeals from the secular to the ecclesiastical arm disallowed. Again he is in conflict with the Bishop of Barcelona. All the folks here are Bishop's men: "daily

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prefers these moneys to pass to unknown and perhaps ungrateful persons, rather than to my sons, who are servants of Your Holiness and poor." The Pope allowed the claim, on condition that the Duke erected a tomb to Alexander VI. in Sta Maria Maggiore, and one to Cardinal Henry Borgia. Later, Pius IV. allowed Borgia, then General, to put Alexander's tomb in the Gesù not yet completed. This was, however, evaded, and Alexander stayed where he was.

he can steal any he chooses from the gibbet." To this Bishop had appealed a certain brigand whose record was such that neither the living, "nor the dead, should they rise," could quote an equal scandal. "Yet the Bishop will punish the fellow with a flick of holy water." "I am off hunting," he ruthlessly writes, "with the justice of God"; and certainly the record of his executions is very high. He attacks brigand fortresses in person, and exacts unconditional surrenders, and one Friday hangs six men. He is continually involved in mountain-raids, "on foot and armed and after dinner. Your lordship can imagine what a business that is for a man of my girth" (*qué cosa para mi barriga* is the more vivid original). But he tries all means rather than death. "If hanging," he writes, "were the real remedy, there would be no more trouble in Catalonia, so many have been hanged." He tries, and fails, to form a sort of Legion of the Damned, for Algeria, out of these ex-criminals. He did not, indeed, succeed; but after his departure the failure was far more universal, complete, and cruel.

His law-court existence was the more distasteful to him because he had, all his life, been accustomed (as he complained) to violent exercise. None the less, suddenly ordered to

Perpignan, he gave nine consecutive hours to a single case. Even more exasperating were the interminable disputes with a meticulously jealous nobility. Whole months of argument, armed affrays, enduring feuds of family against family occur because the wrong man has been wearing a sword, or not wearing a sword, in public; or because a Duke has unwarrantably put up a canopy over his seat at a tournament. The canopy is torn down; replaced; all Society takes sides. Count So-and-so is asked to let the ladies pass in to dinner first . . . daggers are drawn: Borgia bids fair to be assassinated. In most cases it is some viceregal or imperial prerogative which the Viceroy considers slighted. Voluminous correspondence with the Emperor follows, so personal in tone that, clearly, no mere secretaries are expected to peruse it. And in all this, Borgia is as tactful as he is ruthless. You will, too, see him strike sharply at the tallest poppies. He never punishes because he personally has been hurt or injured. Hurt he often is, and angered; but that will not colour his argument. His self-abnegation in his master's cause was absolute. In one point only he was defeated. He could not reform the convents. Later, as a Jesuit, he will suggest that the right to imprison if not to inflict corporal punishment be granted to Superiors of the

Society: here, he feels that no remedy, but extinction only, will be adequate. Let no more novices be received. He and the Bishop of Lerida are ready "to die, if necessary," in the attack upon the recalcitrant abbesses.

General history alone would be served by an account of the Viceroy's energetic share in Charles V.'s expedition against Tunis and Algier. Legend makes Francis preternaturally enlightened, by medium of the Gandia Poor Clares, as to its disastrous ending. Far from it. Loyalty to Charles blinded even his political insight. Paul III. and Doria, Grand Admiral, were against the expedition. Borgia backed it enthusiastically; arranged for its supplies; eagerly awaited news; could not believe his ears when disaster was announced. Characteristically, he at once set to work cutting wood to make new ships.

After the all-important Cortes of 1542, of which the history is again of political, not hagiographical interest, Borgia's reign having been approved despite endless criticisms and annoyances, he inaugurated his second triennium by further developing the fortifications of Barcelona and Tarragona, and in fact was so occupied with imperial affairs that he did not go to Gandia, when, after his father's death (January 7, 1543), much complicated business

connected with the succession had to be carried through. He entrusted the Duchy to the administration of Pedro Galceran de Borgia, his half-brother, and the opening of the will to his natural brother John Christopher. The Pope wrote to condole, reminding him that the dead Duke was "grandson of Alexander VI., of happy memory, to whom we owe all our fortune." Francis was to continue to act worthily of so great a father and ancestor, and to consider himself the Pope's special protégé.

However, the Emperor now definitely informed the new Duke that he was to leave Catalonia, and, with his wife, assume the highest official post in the household of his son Philip, whom he was marrying to Maria, Infanta of Portugal. On April 22, 1543, the Duke of Gandia was officially declared chief Major-domo to the Princess of Spain, president of her council and keeper of the purse; he was, too, to have a place in the councils of state. The Duchess was to be first lady-in-waiting; her sister was to enter the same household; two of her daughters were to be maids of honour. They were to live at the royal palace: immense revenues were assured to them. The future spread golden before the Borgias. Charles appeared to be equivalently appointing the prime minister of the next reign.

Meanwhile the Duke and his family retired for a few weeks' visit to Gandia. It was for a space of years they stayed there, in the eclipse of all their glorious sun.

With what character, now, was the Duke of Gandia able to confront the social disgrace about to overwhelm him ?

His biographers, contradictory, and working on hypotheses or a general view of what seems to them fitting, portray him as a man given to terrific penances, immensely protracted prayers, yearning for release from a world and life he loathed, begging the Emperor for deliverance. In gross and in detail they appear grievously to misjudge him. He lived his life out to the utmost, loved and exulted in it, and thoroughly expected, and intended, and indeed fought vigorously to continue and consolidate it. This we shall see in a moment. All these lamentations, all this pessimism and morose misanthropy—for it were nothing less—is not perceptible in so much as one line of his buoyant and masculine correspondence. We hear that he rose daily at two or three for several hours of prayer. The vague rumours which originated these assertions were as contradictory as the assertions themselves. But it is certain that Borgia wrote to the Emperor to tell him of an incredible feat: he had got up at three to see

a galley launched. . . . Still, it is clear that he prayed increasingly from 1539 onwards, went often to communion, and, as Knight of St. James, recited a daily Rosary. By praying prostrate, we hear, he developed appalling maladies, and *lost all his teeth.* Beside the fact that his death-mask, where the teeth are apparent, refutes this legend, it is certain that his health was normally sound, except for a good deal of gout. The Lombay family had been dispensed by Clement VII. from fasting and abstinence, but he chose to observe the strict fast of the Franciscan Tertiaries, to whom he belonged. He felt so much better after a Lent on this diet that he kept it up for a year, and after this continued it in a modified way, eating only soup and mutton at a table furnished with magnificence exceptional even then. Accustomed to drink generously, he weaned himself from this little by little (it is said), by dropping, daily, some wax into the goblet from which he drank, thereby slowly diminishing its capacity. In this way he considerably reduced his obesity, which had grown so enormous that the table was curved into a concave, to insure his comfort, where he sat.* It is probable that he took the dis-

* I feel bound to mention the story which became famous, and is as constantly alleged against him as Aloysius Gonzaga's downcast eyes are quoted to his

cipline periodically and was generous in almsgiving. This at least can be checked by his accounts. His family life was particularly warm and affectionate, and it is clear from the wording of his wife's will, made in the year of her death, that to the end they hoped God would bless their already large family with yet further increase,

Francis Borgia, like most others, perhaps, worked steadily on himself, and was worked on by God, until the great change from the natural man to the saint had been accomplished. In his correspondence of this period, there are still many flashes of pique, and great sensitiveness on the point of reputation, anxiety about public opinion and resentment of gratitude not shown; also a quite passionate energy of

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discredit—that Borgia became so thin that his skin fell loose, till he could wrap it round and round himself. . . . This repulsive myth can fortunately be watched developing, and its origin assigned. When he was General of the Jesuits he suffered terribly from a dyspeptic distension of the stomach and had constantly to be massaged. When the distension was relieved, a crease or wrinkle appeared in the skin. This he showed to a Franciscan Father who had twice called on him, and was offended at being told—without Borgia's knowledge—that the General was too busy to see him. Borgia, dismayed at his apparent lack of courtesy, hastened to the Ara Cœli and explained his illness to the friar.

work, and many social and traditional prejudices.

Was not Borgia's that variety of the Spanish temperament which is essentially ascetic? By that I do not mean melancholic (though what melancholy broods in the eyes of how many Spanish portraits!), nor apathetic (it is compatible with much fire, and strong, occasionally explosive, passions), nor necessarily introspective (Francis, as I said, was all his time almost terribly straightforward and objective), nor self-torturing nor even self-renouncing. But it is one which disregards all softer promptings, if such there be, within itself; which runs the danger of becoming hard, contemptuous, calculating even (and we have seen that Francis was no sort of Don Quixote in his enterprises: he knew well the meaning of money: how to prepare for war; where the centre of gravity, in each department, lay); it tends, when just, to be ruthless; when in doubt, to choose the harder alternative and carry its decision through; when in conflict, to sacrifice enjoyment for glory. The singular and in many ways austere court of Charles V. gave the young Marquis a congenial field. He was of the type which goes in black, but it shall be black velvet; or needs gold to work with, but treats it as a tool. In the natural

order it was this temperament that made him live thus brilliantly, yet chaste; energetic, just and rigorously loyal. Supernaturally, it taught him to disregard, gradually, the personal element in rebuffs or injuries; to exalt his Emperor-worship to a loftier plane where in all daily life the Divine Majesty was worshipped; to chastise the body which still had its revolts; and to correct the imagination, thought, and will till a true perspective should have become habitual; and in each next step of life to look for the Providence which should ordain it.

And this interior life was strongly fostered by his associates. All his years Francis Borgia seems to have had to do with Saints, and men whose *business* was as much the Christian life as court life, and the welfare of his province or estates, were his own. The Poor Clares haunted his childhood, and their prayers and even counsel follow all his goings. Blessed John of Avila had preached at the Empress's funeral and had talked with him before he left for Catalonia. At Barcelona, a Franciscan lay-brother, Juan de Texeda, a man of stormy background, lived in great sanctity. The Viceroy heard of him, saw much of him, forwarded his rather startling plea for ordination, and obtained papal leave to carry him off to Gandia, where he lived in the Duke's palace.

He certainly stimulated the mystical and penitential side of Borgia. In 1539 Antonio Araoz, a Jesuit of one year's standing, and not yet priested, arrived at Barcelona. This first Jesuit to set foot in Spain took by storm a town right willing to be stormed, remembering as it did the sojourn of Ignatius, fifteen years ago, within it. Borgia made inquiries, and was struck by the good the Society might do in helping on the work of reform. Peter Faber passed there too, in 1541 and 1542. Later, Araoz returned, and when Ignatius recalled him to Rome, Borgia pleaded, almost indignantly, that he might be left to continue his revival-work. Araoz had to leave; but Borgia was, henceforward, in frequent correspondence with the General of the Jesuits.

III.

THE DUKE OF GANDIA

"A Dream cometh through the multitude of the Business."—Eccl. v. 3.

Hardly was Borgia established at Gandia when a thunderbolt struck his fortunes. King John of Portugal and his wife Queen Catherine, to whom the Duke had been page at Tordesillas, refused point-blank to admit him or his wife to their daughter's court in any position whatsoever. Why? Because Charles had appointed the Gandias without consulting John and Catherine? Such was the alleged explanation. More probably, however, the King and Queen each bore a grudge, to the Duchess and the Duke respectively. Catherine remembered that the old Duke had refused to allow Francis to come with her to Portugal when she wanted him. At last she could slap back. John on his side knew that the Duchess had been a friend of the Cardinal of Vise, Miguel de Silva. Now Silva had been disgraced for asserting that John was illegitimate, his father Emmanuel

having married his sister-in-law, Maria of Aragon, without dispensation. The Gandias wrote in much alarm, apologizing, protesting, explaining; after all, they were but obeying orders. . . . They received new snubs, sometimes polite, sometimes insolent.

Most Honourable and Magnificent Duchess, my Niece [wrote Catherine to Eleanora],—I, Doña Catherine, by the grace of God Queen of Portugal [a string of other pompous titles to domination follows], in Africa, Mistress of Guinea and the coast, of navigation and trade in Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, Infanta of Germany, Castille, Léon and Aragon, of the Two Sicilies and of Jerusalem, I cause you to be saluted as my well-beloved. I have seen the letter you have written to me; and my brother, the Infant, has told me all you have written to him; and since there is no answer and the Infant will tell you and inform you of all that I think, I refer you to him.

Written at Cintra, Aug. 30, 1543.

The Queen.

The Infant, Don Luis, for his part, wrote that if the Duchess thought to force her way into the royal household sword in hand, she was

gravely mistaken. The Duke and Duchess wrote indignantly to the Emperor. The slight put on them was intolerable. Deeply offended and hurt, they preferred to stay away from court altogether. This Charles permitted. They decided to wait a year, Francis observing with annoyance his dwindling income,* and writing constantly to Charles to save his honour. Charles was away fighting, and nothing happened.†

Borgia occupied himself by fortifying Gandia, improving his sugar-cane plantations (which brought in much of the Gandia revenue), and

* His behaviour was in keeping with the times, though to us it seems singular. Military, political and ecclesiastical posts, with large salaries, were given to noblemen who then placed in them ill-paid and inefficient lieutenants. The Duke and Duchess eagerly solicited the government of the very important town Jativa for their son Juan, promising to find a Lieutenant "with whom God and His Majesty should be satisfied." Juan was eleven years old.

† The whole of this episode is omitted or glozed by the Saint's official biographers, partly because to narrate it would have offended too many living personages, and partly because it seemed too worldly an event to assign as true cause of the Duke's change of outlook. It was, however, the decisive moment of his life, though he did not even yet realize for some time that a worldly career was over, now, for him.

embarking on a mining project, which unluckily failed.

In 1544, however, it seemed likely that he would go to Valladolid after all. Catherine withdrew her opposition, probably owing to representations from Charles. Despite the ill-health of the Duchess, Borgia had been ready enough to go the moment she could travel. Now he heard, however, that their advent was being kept from the princess, who was expecting to give birth to a child, lest it should annoy her. This offended him. "The prospect of a chilly reception," he wrote, "makes an end of our good will." The double delay proved fatal. On July 12, four days only after her baby was born, the ladies in waiting left the unlucky princess to servants, while they went off to see an *auto-da-fe* at which two criminals were to be burned. The princess experienced a sudden craving for a lemon. The servants dared no refusal. She devoured the fruit and died of it.

Charles immediately arranged a new marriage for Philip, with his niece Mary, daughter of Francis I. of France. The Duke and Duchess should hold, at this new court, the position they had twice been cheated of. Francis was by now thoroughly disgusted and believed that God did not really mean him to go. His

interests were elsewhere. "He says," Araoz wrote to Ignatius, "that he is sick of courts, but will go in order to make the Jesuits better known there." For Borgia was convinced that the Society was likely to do the best work for the spiritual and intellectual regeneration of Spain. But the Duchess, whom the disgrace inflicted by her own country's king had wounded literally to death, had pined ever since and was sinking. Francis, in deep distress, everywhere procured prayers for her recovery. Himself on his knees, praying for this, he suddenly felt that while indeed God would grant him the boon he asked, this was not, really, intended by the plan of Providence, and he resigned her future into the divine hands. She indeed was anxious to die, and on March 27, 1546, she received the last sacraments, caused the story of the Passion to be read to her, and quietly expired.

The death of an Empress had cut the young man off from that earlier court life; the caprice of a Queen had prevented its resumption; now it was his wife who was God's instrument for completing Borgia's withdrawal from his active partnership with earthly kings and kingdoms.

He turned his mind first to his family and estates; and, after much legal business, was free yet further to develop his duchy. He

founded a hospital, which still exists. He perfected the Collegiate church of Gandia in all liturgical and musical matters. He improved the position of the parochial clergy and introduced Dominicans as missioners, and St. Louis Bertrand, to be canonized on the same day as himself, came to live at the Priory in Lombay. He had desired to open at Gandia a school, governed by Jesuits, for his subjects of Moorish descent, for an unusually high number of neophytes of Moorish and Jewish blood impoverished the Christianity of his state while it filled his coffers. But Ignatius preferred to widen the project, and make the school of general utility to all the Duke's subjects. In 1545 distinguished Jesuits had arrived to inaugurate the work, and soon the dreams of the founder took fire, and he resolved to raise the College to the rank of University. It had its brief day; but the neighbourhood of Valencia blighted it, and it never throve.

Borgia's interior life fell swiftly into perspective. He associated too much with the Jesuits and believed too thoroughly in their reforming vocation not to wish to commit himself irrevocably to them. Favre arrived in Gandia in 1546. Borgia made a retreat. The "election" meditation tore apart for him the last remaining veils. He too would

take their vows. On June 2, he declared himself to Father Oviedo, their superior, and made a preliminary vow to enter, if leave were granted. Meanwhile he embarked upon theology and took Latin lessons. Ignatius wrote accepting him, but insisted that all Borgia's children must be married or established before he took any further step. Meanwhile let him study, but not yet announce his intentions. The world was unprepared for so violent a sensation.

The Duke had hoped to settle his business in a year. It took him four. Meanwhile he devoted himself to the interests of the Society to which he meant to belong. In September, 1547, Ignatius raised Spain to the rank of a Province, with Araoz for Provincial. Gandia was its most important house, containing eleven out of the forty-one Spanish Jesuits. Borgia founded Jesuit scholarships in Alcalà; improved others at Valencia; persuaded Paul III. to examine and approve the *Exercises*, and had them published at his own expense. Already he induces others of the learned and devout to join the Society; he gives it a tithe of all his revenues, and proposes new Foundations up and down Spain. Ignatius, cautious, usually, to excess, gives literally *carte blanche* to the Duke, and sends him blank sheets signed,

where Borgia can write what he pleases, as coming from the General. . . .

For all that, the spirit by now triumphant at Gandia was not precisely that of the Founder of the Jesuits, nor what Francis's own spirit was to become. In fact, the Spanish Jesuits were long to preserve a bent towards an eremitical and penitential life which appears Carmelite rather than Ignatian. Juan of Texeda, domiciled in the palace (Ignatius had refused him a lodging at the College), influenced not only the Duke but the whole community. Father Oviedo, in particular, grew more and more enamoured of the hermit's life as opposed to the Apostles', and demanded that each Jesuit should spend one month yearly in complete solitude. Father Onfroy rose at midnight and prayed seven hours consecutively. Oviedo wished to celebrate two or even three masses daily. Borgia, though alarmed by these eccentricities, grew so savage in his own self-mortification that Ignatius had to check him and assign to him a moderator with authority to supervise his prayers and penances. Let him seek to augment, not diminish, his strength. Let him halve his time for prayer, and do no penances which caused blood to flow. Borgia submitted, but chafed. Yet so sane was he that to none other was entrusted the re-establish-

ment of Oviedo's equilibrium; and that priest, later on, lived twenty most heroic years of solitary life as Bishop in Ethiopia, destitute almost of the necessities of existence.

Despite his personal austerity Borgia abated nothing of his state. He retained his father's servants as well as his own. In winter they wore liveries of scarlet velvet; in summer, scarlet silk. The pomp of his chapel and the perfection of his carriages were renowned, and he kept very open house. His purchases of rich woven stuffs, for his chapel and for court ladies, became spoken of. Even in 1550 he added a barony to his estates, and his income increased steadily. At the Cortes of Aragon, convened at Monzon in 1549, he was one of the four *tratadores* who acted as middlemen between King and States.

On his return from this " Babylon " he made the following singularly shrewd comment on his age:

" Those who know God," he wrote to St. Ignatius, " will not speak of Him; those who do not, cannot. So the world remains in darkness, though, to my mind, it is being ruined through lack of *will* rather than of *knowledge*."

The Emperor was still determined Borgia should be major-domo to Philip. Ignatius was on the horns of a dilemma. Should Francis

remain in Spain, his fate was fixed. Should he escape to Rome, the Pope would certainly make him a Cardinal. He ended by getting leave from the Pope, for a layman, who should remain anonymous, to be professed as a Jesuit and remain three years more in secular life to finish off his affairs. Borgia therefore took his vows as a Professed on February 1, 1548. He wound up his lawsuits; completed the restoration of his palace, covering its ceilings with the Borgia coronets familiar to those who know the Borgia rooms in the Vatican. Round the walls he wrote, "None shall be crowned save he who has legitimately striven. So run that ye may obtain." He married Carlos, his eldest son, to a member of that Centelles family with which Alexander VI. first projected an alliance; in 1548 his eldest daughter Isabel was married to a great personage whom Borgia prevented from ever seeing her until they met actually at the foot of the altar. . . . His second daughter Juana made an equally exalted alliance; Alvaro, Fernando and Alfonso, sixteen, thirteen and twelve, were entrusted to Carlos; the youngest, Dorothy, was a Poor Clare.*

* Borgia retained through life the most tender and active affection for his children. A packet of their letters to him from 1566 to 1569 has been found, full of minute detail. So, too, for his friends. A daughter of los Cobos is to be married. "Here," he wrote,

In his free time Borgia quietly studied, and took a Doctor of Divinity's degree at Gandia, a safe candidature! He reduced to Litany form Aquinas's *De Deo, De Trinitate, De Incarnatione.* In March, 1549, Araoz told Ignatius that Borgia needed only one year more. But might he wait a few months over the year, till Carlos should be twenty-one? And might he bring Oviedo? Oviedo as rector would not be tolerated if Borgia were away. (This shows who, at Gandia, was the true Superior.) Finally, might he, at Monserrato, declare himself a religious and travel as such? Ignatius agreed, save that Borgia must travel still as Duke, with the gaining of a jubilee as pretext, He obtained, too, leave for Borgia, still anonymous, to be ordained when he chose, and absolved from censures or irregularities incurred during his term of office. In 1550 Francis announced his departure to his nearest relatives, and in August made his will. Rumours darted abroad—the Duke was going to Rome to be made Cardinal: to become General of the

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" my feet dance of themselves with sheer joy at *your* joy, over there in Madrid." Presents go to and fro. The General sends his son a map, and a watch. . . . His daughters, in the charming and unchanging manner of nuns, send him jam and sweets and syrup of orange-flowers and corporals and beg " one little Hail Mary. . . ."

Jesuits. . . . . Rome rang with his advent; and notabilities, from Pope downwards, fought to be his host. Borgia said farewell, at Valencia, to his friend St. Thomas of Villanova, and left Gandia quietly on August 31, happy, yet anxious. For he had, that month, drawn as motto, *Thou shalt feed my people Israel: thou shalt be captain over Israel.* In a panic he rejected the omen, and drew twice more, but each time the same motto. As he left Gandia, he turned to salute its walls, and intoned the psalm *In exitu Israel de Ægypto;* and, "The net is broken," he continued, "and we have been set free." With him went his son Juan, himself, too, to become a Jesuit.

Carlos walled up behind him the gate through which he left.

IV.

CAPTAIN OF CHRIST

1550—1572

"En un mot, la philosophie divise les hommes par les opinions, la religion les unit dans les mêmes principes; il y a donc un contrat éternel entre la politique et la religion. Tout État, si j'ose le dire, est un vaisseau mystérieux qui a ses ancres dans le Ciel."—RIVAROL.

I.

On his way to Rome Borgia naturally stayed with Hercules II. of Ferrara, son of Lucrezia Borgia. That court was extraordinarily "modern," as we should say, and sparkling with intellectualism. Renée, the wife of Hercules, was a brilliant woman and frankly admired Calvin. To picture Francis in that entourage would baffle imagination, were it not certain that his austere Spanish gravity and ducal magnificence could brow-beat the cleverest opposition, even if his real charm could not spell-bind mockery into silence. On October 23, he was met, three miles from Rome, by a perfect regiment of splendid persons. He rejected all offers of hospitality,

and the cortège trooped through narrow streets to the Jesuit house. Ignatius and the Community stood on the steps to welcome the Duke. A Jesuit priest saluted him in Latin verses which appear to contain at least two remarkable false quantities. At enormous expense Ignatius had fitted up a whole wing of the house, with a separate entrance for notabilities, to lodge Borgia and his suite. Borgia wished to pay for this. Ignatius refused, though his hospitality set the wildest rumours stirring; alms ceased to be offered; and the impecunious Community was finding itself gravely out of pocket.

Ignatius and Francis studied one another. "Hitherto," the latter wrote, "I had felt myself a child, and Peter Faber to be a giant; but beside Ignatius, Faber himself is a child. . . ." Ignatius on his side summed up Borgia and found him in no point wanting. Borgia determined to rebuild the awkward Jesuit Church. He witnessed the blessing of the first stone; his son Don Juan helped to dig foundations. Moreover, he founded and for long maintained the Roman College, which Ignatius wished to call the Borgia. Francis refused, and allowed himself an orgy of religious observance. He served at table, and only after much difficulty obtained leave to

wash up in the scullery. All went as it should; Juan broke a dish, and told his fault in public, while the Duke himself took a meal at the "penance table," to which he was escorted by his son and members of his retinue. Magnificence and abnegation, in streaks, made of the visit a confusing period, not without its comic aspect for a modern, and in February Francis left Rome, more than content to do so, and in a panic of Julius III., who was already talking of the Cardinalate. The Emperor knew by now of the Duke's determination to abdicate, arrived at, Francis insists, only since the death of the Duchess; gradually he made his way back to Spain.

Francis visited Loyola, and there Juan first met Doña Laurenza, niece of Ignatius, and heiress to his old home. Juan wrote to Ignatius, that his father and Araoz, the provincial, were exaggerating their penances and should be stopped. A certain petulance of tone hints that he was out of sympathy with his new mode of life. In fact, the moment his father's very firm hand was off him, he allied his fortunes closely with those of the minister Ruy Gomez and of Philip; ran up enormous debts for clothes, and with great skill married himself to the much sought heiress of Loyola, Doña Laurenza. Ignatius was angry; Juan

was faithless to his vocation: it was being said that the Loyola family was already reaping its profit from the Borgia connection. Francis, however, was lenient, and, later, celebrated the marriage service of Juan and Laurenza.

This was not, however, till August, 1552; meanwhile Borgia had settled down at Onate, where he received Imperial permission to abdicate; he cut his hair and beard and assumed clerical attire. On May 23, 1551, he was ordained, preached his first sermon on June 29, and celebrated his first Mass on August 1 in the oratory at Loyola. Juan served it.*

Ignatius exempted Francis from all jurisdiction other than his own, and left him free to travel and act as he pleased, and for a time he was the most talked of man in Spain. Naturally the countryside flocked to see the Duke turned missioner, and nothing could stand up against his mingled influence. In

* It is touching to follow his cult for Ignatius. He insists on lodging where Ignatius lodged, and using table, bed and crockery which Ignatius once had used. A vivid touch survives in a letter to Ignatius. "We discovered the pony your Paternity left at the hospital seventeen years ago. He is very fat and good-tempered, and still very useful to the hospital. He has every privilege at Aspeitzia; and even when he gets inside garden-railings, nobody stops him."

six months he was known as the Apostle of the Basques.

But Ignatius had more delicate work for him than revivals. Simon Rodriguez, one of the First Companions, provincial of Portugal, and high in favour at court, had to be removed. Borgia must carry the business through. This would have brought him into contact with the court which had refused his presence as major-domo. Francis would have been walking upon eggshells. As a matter of fact he got no farther than Salamanca. But he had at Burgos, Valladolid, Tordesillas and Toro, renewed many old and influential acquaintances, and obtained complete empire over the mind of Juana, daughter of Charles V., affianced to the heir to the throne of Portugal. In Holy Week, he put the entire court into retreat. On this journey he took with him Fr. Bustamante, a very distinguished architect-ecclesiastic, with much political training, whose personality, dare I say, contributes a certain element of comic relief to the rather terrific Borgia, whose close associate he now became.

In 1553, however, John III. of Portugal himself summoned Francis to Lisbon. Here first is discernible that jealousy and opposition consistently, henceforward, displayed towards Borgia by Fr. Araoz, provincial of Spain, whose

head had been, we may confess, somewhat turned by his continual sojourn at the Court of Philip, and his close intimacy with the minister Ruy Gomez de Silva. It was indeed a trial to see himself eclipsed at all points by the neo-Jesuit Francis Borgia, who was not even subject to him as Provincial. He announced everywhere that Borgia ought to lie hid and abandon active life. He forthwith received a sharp rebuke from Ignatius, one of a long series, calculated to envenom the wound which, as a thorn ever in Borgia's side, he was already making. On August 31 Francis reached Lisbon. Catherine could not believe her eyes. This then was the man she had rejected. Into this, her playmate of so long ago had changed. . . . Incredible marks of esteem were showered on him. The king took off his hat. . . . Borgia was asked to sit. . . . Meals, beds, medicaments for a bruise he had got by knocking his forehead against a door were sent to the lodging he would not leave. . . . Francis succeeded all along the line, and even invented a pious card-game which became the rage at court. . . . He left in October, having, beneath the froth of a rather absurd hero-worship (not unlike what Garibaldi excited when he came to England), completed an immense amount of business, and, what alone

he cared for, really achieved spiritual results of wide and lasting importance.

Immediately upon the flamboyant success followed the storm. Jerome and Pedro Pardo de la Casta caused, in January, 1554, a certain Pedro Figuerola to be assassinated at Valencia. The Figuerolas retaliated by murdering Don Luis Pardo de la Casta on the steps of the palace of the Viceroy, the Duke of Segorbia. Among the murderers a servant of Galceran de Borgia was recognized, caught, and summarily hanged. The Borgias sided at once with the Figuerolas, and shot down Don Diego of Aragon, a natural son of the Viceroy's. Diego and Philip Borgia, brothers of Francis, shared in this last assassination. Other astounding acts of violence were committed by the Borgias, and soon the whole kingdom was on fire against them. Duke Carlos hid for a year at Baza. For eight years the court-influence of Francis prevented justice overtaking his brothers, but Diego was beheaded in 1562, having been captured in a convent of Poor Clares when Francis was out of the country. Philip escaped to Africa, and served under Galceran, then Governor of Tlemcen and Oran. The violent unpopularity which now attached itself to the Borgia clan had a profound effect on Borgia's career and was a strong card in the hand of Araoz.

What troubled Borgia's conscience in a way that neither royal flattery nor popular persecution could, was the determination of Julius III. to make him Cardinal. It seemed grotesque, in the unregenerate eyes of the sixteenth century, that a grandee of Spain should beg in the streets, live in hospitals, and go clad in shabby black. Indeed, not a few felt the whole house of Borgia to be disgraced. Emperor and Pope were resolved he should be Cardinal. There is not the slightest doubt that Borgia contemplated, from his sense of duty towards the Pope, the acceptance of the Hat. Ignatius himself was utterly puzzled. He ended by flatly opposing himself to the scheme, and after complex and emotional negotiations, left the decision to Borgia, though *he*, Polanco wrote, would probably prefer to go bareheaded in sun and rain than to accept such a hat. . . . However, Borgia hesitated. As for Araoz, in 1552 he wrote explicitly that Borgia was fully resolved to accept. The project lapsed till 1554, when the offer was renewed and Rome believed Francis was for accepting. Polanco wrote, much worried, to Fr. Nadal, that if Borgia accepted, otherwise than ordered to do so under pain of sin, he would, in the opinion of the whole Society at Rome, from its head downwards, ruin all the good he had ever done.

Nadal himself wrote in his diary: "At Tordesillas, I thrice spoke freely to Francis, who was then in bed. I said to him, that if the Hat arrived, I would no longer believe that nobility, in Christ's kingdom, was the common possession of all, since here was someone who wished to *win* it." "It is unintelligible to me," Polanco wrote, "that Fr. Francis will not make his public profession." * On June 17, 1554, Nadal wrote a quite agonized letter in which he implored Francis not to nullify his abdication, or set an example which would ruin the Society before it was properly founded. For Francis to be back in gorgeous affluence, after his renunciation, would be a "hideous paradox and infinitely pitiable." "I don't know whether I speak wisely, but, like Master Jerome Domenech, I fly into fits of anger at the thought." Ignatius cut the knot by ordering Francis to take the "simple" vow added by the Professed to the substantial vows of religion, that they will accept no dignity unless commanded to by the Pope

* His profession was still kept private. Profession made the possession of moneys, etc., impossible. Attached to it was a simple vow not to receive dignities. Francis never made his profession publicly, "no doubt to have the right to continue receiving from the Emperor the revenues which he made over to the Roman College." (Fr. Suan.)

under pain of sin. He had not done so yet, but took it on August 22, 1554, and amid many further solicitations from Pope and kings, had at least, henceforth, a quiet conscience. But this page of history, little known, has seemed to me curious, and to illuminate both the man and his period.

In November, 1554, Ignatius resigned the active management of his Society to Fr. Nadal, his second self, as it were, and a man of greater influence, perhaps, in its history than any save its founder, and singularly unstudied nowadays. He had suggested the division of the Spanish peninsula into four provinces, and this Ignatius ordered him in 1554 to effect, placing Borgia in Nadal's own position, as Commissary General over the four provincials. Borgia in the world had been a great prince: it was an act of sovereign daring, worthy of Loyola's unique knowledge of men, to give him after three years only of priesthood and not one month of subordination, so irresponsible a post. It remains that it was congenitally impossible for Francis Borgia to be anywhere but *first;* and however exalted was his post of Commissary, he was still subordinate till he reached his proper place of General.

Araoz, Provincial of Castille, naturally resented Borgia's superiority, as he had already

resented Nadal's. It is certain, moreover, that Borgia did *encroach*. In fact, the political relation of Commissary to Provincial was so awkward that the second General Congregation of the Society, held in 1565, was to abolish for ever the former post. Borgia meanwhile rediscovered himself, and his astonished confrères beheld the Viceroy, not merely latent, in the Jesuit. "Fr. Francis," said Bustamante a little naïvely, "seems to have as much taste for government as he had for prayer. This proves his spirit of obedience. It can be said of him, 'Quæ prius nolebat tangere anima mea, nunc, præ obedientia, cibi mei sunt.'" * He began, to his annoyance, to grow stouter once more, and decided to eat no *game*, but only ordinary meat, fish and vegetables. Cordova asked Ignatius to order him to take chicken and kid's flesh and less fish: Ignatius assigned him, for permanent medical supervisor, Melchior Marcos, a lay-brother, once one of Borgia's chapel choristers in Catalonia, whom he had received into the Society. Periodically, his bent towards austerity displayed itself. Nadal once had to tell him that Ignatius wished him to diminish his penances. "'Between you,'

* "What, aforetime, my soul refused to touch, is now, for obedience' sake, my very food" (Job vi. 7, in which *præ angustia* is read).

answered Francis, "exceedingly upset," adds Nadal, "between you, you will force me to join the Carthusians." Yet "Beware," he one day jokingly told his novices, "of the devil who disguises himself as a Contemplative." Stories of the duration and ecstatic character of his Mass floated all around him; his prayers prolong themselves till Marcos has to order him, by obedience, to go and eat; he goes to confession, one legend relates with splendid determination to remain for ever uneclipsed, six times a day. Better authenticated are the tales of his unlimited abnegation in hospital and slum; his characteristic reply to a noble who was shocked at Borgia's poor lodging: "Don't be anxious; I always send a steward to get me a room ready—*i.e.*, the conviction that I deserve to lie in hell." The "steward of St. Francis" became proverbial in Spain. Best of all was his "care of all the churches," and the drudgery of office.

Already we see him bent on what will become a permanent preoccupation, the establishment of proper novitiates. He alarmed even the most ardent by founding no less than twenty new houses in Spain; others he refused, because there were not enough Jesuits to go round. There certainly was not enough money: he exacted of the new communities that they

should live in a poverty which he, no doubt, had proved he did not fear, but which they as surely did not like. Moreover, the personnel of the province was thus kept in a state of solution, so to say, and work was robbed of some of its coherence and continuity. An anti-Borgia party began to crystallize in the Peninsula, nervous of his conquering march.

The only power able to dominate him was Nadal, who arrived a second time in Spain in 1556; its provinces were not, it is true, like the rest of the Society, under Nadal's jurisdiction, for Ignatius wanted to leave Borgia entirely free: Nadal was not, however, Borgia's subject, and dealt roundly with him. "Fr. Francis," he wrote in his diary, "does not get on well with Araoz: Araoz cannot put his heart into governing; Francis draws everything to himself." In fact, Borgia sharply reprimanded Araoz in the presence of Nadal and of others, on a number of points, and issued orders which Nadal clearly disapproved of. Himself rebuked by Borgia for forcing himself upon him, he kept silence, and perceived that Borgia took in ill part two or three observations he had made on domestic matters.* Clearly Borgia's

* Borgia had set apart a wing of the house for guests; had received Galceran de Borgia; and a man who had wounded (or killed ?) another in a duel;

vivacity and manner of commanding and resentment of interference were not wholly chastened yet. He ordered Nadal, during a grand dinner, to explain the Constitutions to the guests in Latin. Nadal had to improvise a lecture which annoyed him, as he frankly says in his diary, an emotion which he felt, he owns, *quod, ex imperio, non admonitum, compellisset ;* because Borgia had commanded and compelled, not requested, him to speak.

Nadal saw that his presence in Spain was depressing Borgia. Borgia was distinctly upset when Nadal told him that this or that decision of his might not be ratified by Ignatius. "Four words from you," wrote Fr. Tablares to the Saint, "would have more effect on Fr. Francis than any one you might send." Ignatius, barely a fortnight before he died, gave Nadal leave to return if he wanted to. He returned.

The poor Commissary felt all this trouble acutely, and lamented it. One day, crowds came out into the streets, as usual, to stare at him. "They look at me," he sighed, "as if

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and had given too sumptuous a dinner in honour of Fr. Barma's last vows. To a certain Fr. Victoria, who had not even Nadal's quasi-authority, but only permission to "advise" Borgia, Francis exclaimed, "As for you, you can say what you choose. . . ."

I were some strange animal. Well—if God hadn't chained me up in a cage of Religion, I should be a wild beast. So let them stare."

I would pause for a brief reflection. Two impressions are unfortunately to be gathered from Borgia's biographies. The first is of a man plaintive and tear-sodden, lamenting constantly the woes of the world and his own miseries, a pessimist seeking ever to shirk responsibility, and ever appealing to sympathetic observers to note how thoroughly he had despaired of, or never cared for, that buoyancy, exhilaration, and spiritual enterprise which marks the true Christian apostle. What we have said shows amply that at no moment of his career was there anything even remotely resembling this in the man who grew from being, what he was first and foremost, a Grandee of Spain, into a great Christian, without any catatrophic disintegration of his nature. Again and again, Borgia grew and developed, and did not stunt and destroy. What is true for Christianity as a whole is true for the Christian; the divine life expands exultantly, and however much Christ's followers may consider the world to be a vale of tears, they know quite well they are not expected to sit down by the roadside and howl. What if they carry a cross? "*Suscepi, suscepi de manu Tua cru-*

cem," cries à Kempis, miscalled a pessimist and disillusioned. "I have welcomed, I have welcomed from thine own hand the Cross." There is the authentic note of triumph in that cry; and all Borgia's career is, even naturally speaking, a triumphant march.

The other impression is that he was a rigid and austere superior, sometimes definitely harsh, a Bismarck, almost a Torquemada; sometimes just prim and proper and meticulous in the unimportant, like a Victorian nursery governess. Anyhow, his name is associated as it were with much most dingily red tape, tied always tightly, and sometimes in very cruel knots. Now if there are qualities more noticeable than others, in Borgia's character and government, they are courtesy and kindness, the freedom and cheerful brusquerie that may be found in very great personages absolutely sure of themselves, a certain grave geniality and a distinguished *grace*. We have probably, in life, met at least one or two extremely *manly* men, endowed, none the less, with the gracious charm of any lady; men capable of firm-fingered dealing with affairs of the first moment, and yet revealing an almost boyish light-heartedness and vivacity of manner and delicacy of feeling which yet at no moment suggest that one should hold them cheap.

Such is what to me appears this very great prince, called upon to deal with lesser men. And when the men were notably less than he, the more careful was his courtesy; his more pointed thrusts were reserved for his more nearly equals; and if I have quoted more instances of his sharpness than his urbanity, that is, I suppose, because it is easier to register sharp stabs, than to convey a pervasive atmosphere, and briefly to portray a flash, than a glow.

On July 31, 1556, Ignatius died. Laynez, Vicar-General, summoned a General Congregation for the spring of 1557. The Spanish Jesuits, for reasons good and bad, desired the Congregation to be held in Spain and exacted that Nadal should remain there. "I did not disguise what I thought," he wrote. "I utterly disagreed. I did not hide how indignant their attitude had made me. I declared that I should leave that very day, and I did so. Fr. Francis was angry with me, and so were all the rest, so freely did I speak. Far from climbing down, I said to Fr. Francis himself, who appeared to be insisting, that I respected him, doubtless, for what he *was*, but not for what he *had* been. . . ." The narrower-minded Spanish Jesuits were indeed anxious that the Society should be, practically, a

Spanish concern: those who saw further perceived that political reasons would indeed make the journey to Rome difficult. The Pope decided for Rome; Francis yielded at once. He refused, however, to come himself. He feared the Cardinalate. He feared, too, to annoy Philip II., peace between whom and Paul IV. was in fact broken early in the year. After infinite difficulties the Congregation was indeed held in Rome, but a genuine attack of gout and other illnesses prevented Borgia from going. He sent, however, two documents, exposing his views on the spirit and organization of the Society, and it cannot be denied that they were markedly restrictive, not to say monastic: he was anxious, even, that superiors should have the right to imprison and otherwise to coerce their refractory subjects; and a certain monastic flavour was visible throughout. But the details concern rather a general history of the Society, and are of interest to us chiefly as marking how imperfect a point of, so to say, *mellowness* this Spaniard had reached. He, later, disallowed much that he now asked.

Outside his Jesuit walls, Borgia's course was even stormier. In 1554, Philip of Spain went to England to marry Mary Tudor. The country needed a regent, and found one in Juana, widow of John III. of Portugal. She was

already devoted to Francis, and now practically asked him to govern for her. Her vow to enter religion she commuted, with Ignatius's approval, into one of obedience to Francis. Only her entreaties prevented Ignatius sending Borgia to the English court, where he himself wanted to go. His position was utterly false. On a notable occasion he had to encourage Juana to obey a papal exaction, against the wishes of the Council; he was all but obliged to proclaim in person the excommunication of Philip II., which the Pope wanted to effect in 1555.

One only incident in this world of Kings and Queens gave Francis wholehearted happiness. For nearly forty years the mad Queen Juana was incarcerated at Tordesillas. For fifteen, her mania expressed itself by a hatred of all that bore on religion. She was thought possessed. Francis visited her in 1554, calmed her without wholly healing her, and in 1555 brought her back to complete peace of mind, in which she died a most holy death. Thus, one by one, the associates of Borgia's boyhood passed, helped by him, into the reality of things.

Driven from the tyranny of illusions and by disgust of empire Charles V. himself was, ever since 1542, " practising for death." He retired

in 1554 to Jarandilla and lived there in a relative solitude. In 1555, he abdicated. He longed, however, to see Borgia. The visits multiplied at Jarandilla. From the loftier plateau to which each of these two old friends had, after his manner, climbed, they surveyed their memories. The chasm between Emperor and favourite was at last bridged. "How different he is," cried Charles, "from the days when he was Marquis," not realizing how profoundly he had himself been altered by the years and the lessoning of life. He inquired about what once had been gracefully ignored between them, the constitution, for example, of the Society. "How they lied to me!" the Emperor exclaimed, when he realized the true aims and methods of men so much calumniated. He showed Borgia presents of new inventions—a globe, a clock. . . . Thus they entered together into the awed confines of old age. For violent contrast, on his way home Francis visited St. Teresa at Avila, and she remained profoundly struck by the priest's lofty level of prayer and spiritual insight. And again a contrast. The Spanish armies were in sore straits, in Flanders. Francis summoned his sons from Madrid. "I have called you," said he, "to inform you that if any of you will not go to shed his blood for Philip, him I will not

recognize as being of my own." To please Charles, Borgia undertook, in 1557, a complicated and secret embassy to the court of Lisbon, an enterprise nearly wrecked by the indiscretions of Bustamante, who was mobbed, and had to be saved by Francis, not to dwell on an accident to the boat in which he was crossing the Tagus, when, once more, Francis alone kept his head. The political results of the mission are alien matter: the episode, however, replaced Borgia all too definitely at a centre of international politics. Borgia went to Charles at Yuste in 1557, where they spent some time together in the simplicity of real affection; and in September, 1558, Charles died there, asking continually, in his agony, where Francis was. The Saint was one of the executors of his will, and preached the funeral panegyric at Valladolid. He preached again, a little later, at the solemn service for Mary Tudor of England. "It would seem," he wrote to Laynez," that this year is starred for the deaths of kings and princes."

Princes and people alike had been sorely troubling him. It was in 1555 that the storm burst forth against the Jesuits. The anti-Jesuit party consisted chiefly of those who were jealous of Borgia's influence with the regent, Juana. At Cordova, Toledo, Granada,

and Seville, opposition ranging from calumny to sheer riot had broken out. At Saragossa the quarrel was mainly ecclesiastical. It was feared that the newly opened Jesuit church would divert too many alms. Ill-will was fomented by a large clerical force, headed by the Vicar-General and the Archbishop, Borgia's uncle. The church was put under an interdict. Children, waving banners painted with demons, stoned the house. Monks performed a triduum of expiatory processions and chanted denunciatory psalms. The Jesuits were banished. It was Doña Luisa de Borja, now Countess of Ribargoza, Francis's favourite sister, who rescued them. Her uncle at once excommunicated her amid scenes worthy of Paraguay. Borgia, in the background, spoke to the princess regent. Like a pinch of dust, her threat of legal proceedings stilled the buzzing of these bees. At Valladolid, under her very eyes, the famous Melchior Cano had, however, discovered that the Jesuits were an incarnation of Antichrist. The nuncio, the princess, his own Provincial, were powerless to prevent his outbursts. Once, when the poor Francis was courteously present at one of Cano's sermons, the preacher caught sight of him. "Turn your back," he cried, "on this man, who, a soldier yesterday, to-day poses as a Saint." Cano advertised the

Society well, and sent to it numerous novices; a member, however, of his own order, Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo, was denounced by him as heterodox, and the Inquisition kept him seventeen years in prison. Francis was ever his close friend, and this loyal support was, later, to work him ill.

In 1559 Philip came to be king in Spain, and the princess regent joined the Poor Clares at Madrid, where Francis's sister was abbess. The field was clear for Borgia's enemies. The Duke of Segorbia was still hot for vengeance upon Diego. Pedro Galceran Borgia, Francis's brother, though held to celibacy, as Grand Master of the Knights of Montesa, was anxious to be dispensed and marry Doña Leonora Manuel, granddaughter of the Duke of Braganza, and Juana's favourite maid-of-honour. Borgia fought for this dispensation and finally obtained it through Laynez, to the great indignation of the King. But Borgia was bent on rectifying the scandal Galceran was giving; else, said he, "no one could have made me write four lines." Then, Philip disliked Paul IV.; he said Borgia took too much money out of the country; he resented his late influence with Juana. Personally the King, unforgetful, perhaps, of that babyhood's affection, when Francis carried him in his arms, and he had

wept to be lifted from them, had shown a desire to foster quite the closest relations with the Jesuit. Borgia, at his request, had indicated the names of those whom he considered most apt to hold high office in the kingdom. . . . But there was a double focus of antagonism—the minister and favourite, Ruy Gomez, highly jealous of Borgia's intimacy; and Araoz. The blow fell from an unexpected quarter. There was little enough of what Borgia called "the hateful leprosy of Lutheranism" in Spain. Still, it was present: Borgia lent all his services to the Inquisition. On the famous May 21, 1559, thirty victims were to be judged at the solemn *auto* of Valladolid, and twelve condemned to death. Of the guilty, one was Anna Enriquez, daughter of the Marquis of Alcañices, and sister of Borgia's son-in-law. Borgia had to escort her, dressed in the *sanbenito*, from prison to scaffold, and lead her back again, when she was to be liberated. He did so, and his words during that brief journey changed her heart utterly, and "she who would have preferred death to such an infamy, and in fact left prison more dead than alive," he wrote, returned exultant and loyal for ever. None the less, a fraudulent accusation of heterodoxy was brought against Francis, and to his amazement a small pious book of his

(it had been added to and interpolated) was condemned. It was Carranza's friendship which was the origin of this attack. Carranza, when himself attainted, refused the Grand Inquisitor for judge, and had demanded Borgia. Here then was the recoil. . . . In 1560, Spain rang with a new calumny. Borgia's relations with the princess regent were incriminated. About the same time domestic losses afflicted him—a son-in-law, a very dear daughter, his favourite sister Luisa. He became profoundly saddened, regretted he could not go to India, and wished to die a martyr. In November, 1559, an excuse offered itself for him to visit Portugal. He knew that the Inquisition had voted for his arrest: he recalled the fate of Cardinal Carranza, and with Bustamante and Marcos and one other, he shook the Spanish dust from his feet.

A curious result of Borgia's departure was the revival of Araoz. Silent as long as Francis was in Spain, he started writing letters of eighteen pages to the unhappy General at Rome, full of complaints and suspicions. "Nothing is concealed from you," Laynez answered. "You have seen everything, even the ciphers. For my part, I don't use them. I call bread bread and wine wine." * Araoz for a while was

* In confidential letters Borgia used to be designated by the curious name of *Raphael*.

converted. To the Toledo Jesuits, he vehemently accused and excused himself alternately as regarded his behaviour to Borgia; and to Borgia himself he dolorously wrote. "I answered," Borgia told Laynez, "as well as I could." Laynez implored Borgia to be genial and to write constantly to Araoz, and displayed anxiety lest Borgia might be escaping to Lisbon, meaning to lay down, without leave, the cross of the Commissariat. "No doubt you have gone to Portugal to cheer yourself with His Highness's company, or to see the province, and not to put yourself into a corner and utterly forget your duty." Laynez exacted very complete answers to his apprehensions. At last Laynez perceived that the false situation could only be rectified by summoning Borgia to Rome as Assistant. He did so in June, 1560, and Pius IV. added a brief. In November, Nadal returned to Spain, and was impressed by the danger of a schism within the Society. The ostensible reason was the opposition of Araoz to Borgia's love for many and quick foundations, and his cult for the Roman College. Nadal insists in his journal on the disaffection, sensitiveness and unsatisfactory state of Araoz. The difficulty was to get Borgia out of Spain. The court was no friend to him, at present; but Philip disliked Pius

even worse. The Pope, in June, 1561, sent another brief; unnecessarily; Borgia had already started. Thoroughly ill, certain that his departure would infuriate Philip, Borgia yielded to the brief, and, with Nadal's express disapproval, started for Rome in July, though superiors had left the ultimate decision in his own hands. He waited to inform Philip till he was in France, at Bayonne. His departure did indeed create a perfect tornado of indignation. Inquisition and Court alike were furious. Nadal himself lost his head somewhat. To the Archbishop of Seville, Grand Inquisitor, he wrote: "I have particularly to complain of him because he has said he was leaving by order of his superiors, whereas the truth is that the Father General has always written to him to satisfy the King before everything, and that he put the matter into my hands, and personally I invariably withstood him in this whenever the question was raised. . . . But nothing of all this astonishes us, who know Fr. Francis, given his temperament (*por su condicion natural*)." He ended by offering to get Francis turned out of the Society if he proved guilty of such charges as the Holy Office might see fit to make. A royal decree, engineered by Ruy Gomez and Araoz, forbidding Nadal to continue his visitation, or

to take a single ducat or person with him out of Spain, was necessary before Nadal recovered his perspective and was able to be properly conscious of the profound and ever deeper veneration he had for Francis.

Meanwhile the Saint in all serenity reached Rome.

II.

It will scarcely seem strange that the story of Francis Borgia during his remaining years at Rome is more briefly to be told than his life hitherto. To be the head of some great institution means sheer business; desk-work; an equable moderation of many tugging forces; a singular mingling of discretion and submission. Perhaps no one is so obedient as a true Governor. Nature as a whole, and individual men, and moral aggregates like an army, a cabinet, or a religious order, can only be ruled by careful study and diagnosis of the laws which organize them, and by action along the lines of these laws, not across them; government is not arbitrary coercion; a living thing perishes beneath the violence of a tyrant, unless it be very strong indeed, and then it breaks him.

Borgia then arrived in Rome in 1561. In 1562, Laynez and Salmeron had to go to Trent, and Borgia was made Vicar-General of

the Society. His first years were naturally spent in making acquaintance with its general business, and with the notable men who ruled the Church. A wonderful triumvirate was formed: Borgia, Michael Ghisleri, who became Pope in January, 1566; and Charles Borromeo, Cardinal of Milan, and nephew of Pius IV. Of these three great reformers, Charles began, under Fr. Ribera's and Borgia's direction, with his own life, and this in so radical a way that his uncle, alarmed, refused for a whole month to receive Laynez, and forbade him to speak to Charles. Other troubles agitated the Society. Borgia, named Assistant of Spain and Portugal in 1564, had his share in resisting the dangerous favours intended for the Society by the Pope. Furious jealousies, and a campaign of pamphlets, joined to the genuine reluctance of the Jesuits to undertake works not intended by their Institute, defeated the cruel kindnesses of Pius. In January, 1565, Laynez died, only fifty-three years old. He refused to name a Vicar-General, but, as he expired, fixed his eyes long on Francis. Francis was in fact nominated, and on July 2, 1565, was elected General. The Pope was enchanted; in Germany, great officials considered all Christendom to be affected by the event; Vienna and Lisbon professed themselves highly content; even at

Madrid, the Court was "rather surprised, but flattered." Philip's animosity died down: the Borgia clan lifted its head anew in Europe.

Borgia had an active general staff. The Society had grown too rapidly: the formation of its men, and the foundation of its houses, appeared so hasty as to lack substance; it had to ask too persistently for the alms necessary to its enormous undertakings. It was known that Borgia's sanguine temperament led him to act precisely along these dangerous lines. A clear-cut programme of action was laid down for him by the General Congregation.

Borgia, as Vicar-General, had generously tried to prolong the Commissariat of Araoz in Spain. It was felt, now, however, that he had so rooted himself at court and was so totally occupied with politics, under the wing of Ruy Gomez, that he would be better at Rome. He was therefore appointed Assistant of Spain, and most affectionately summoned by Borgia. Infinite trouble arose. Araoz was ready to work for the Society, but only in Spain, and without giving up Philip and Ruy Gomez. He ended by obtaining from them a veto on his departure, and died in 1573, having practically abandoned, many years previously, all apostolic work for political.

Francis himself found his apostolic labours

confined to sheer government and the drudgery of correspondence. Like Ignatius of Loyola, he had hated the desk, even though finding it easier than did he to use a pen. "May God take me, or help me to govern aright, or remove this cross," is a phrase which recurs again and again in his spiritual notes. It is in his notes to Visitors in particular, or to any Superior, that his theory and practice of government is best shown. It is certain that Borgia was a man of detail and wished rules to be observed minutely and even recognized that he was personally scrupulous. But he asked to be delivered from this defect, and fought it, and insists throughout on *first* noticing, applauding, and developing the good and living elements in a man or house or province; correction is to come second, and always to be "paternal," not "judicial"; he detests gossip, denunciation, complications. *Buenamente* is an adverb which recurs ever as he writes. He wants things to go—I would almost say with a certain bluff good-humour, with no acerbity of criticism or command; no affectations of piety; no *sour-sweet* charity. "Don't change everything all of a sudden." "If it can be done, do it." "Don't hurry; don't be sensational; if you're second in the field, don't condemn what you find. . . . Don't identify what is good with

what is *obligatory*. . . ." All these negative sentences are, it will be noticed, in essence *not* vetoes, but encouragements, and make for "sweet reasonableness," as we might say: "charity and liberty," he called it. His very restrictions make for development. At Goa, he writes, "you have a personnel of 300—*turba inutilis*—a useless mob." "Henceforward I shall send few, but men of excellence." Thus he can, without loss, develop the mission of Africa and create those of America.*.

By this immense correspondence he kept in touch with the Society's workmen from China to Brazil; by his establishments of noviciates he staffed its future; by his redaction and promulgation of the rules and constitutions (in a form adopted practically without change in 1580) he caused an identical training to be given, a mode of life to be preserved, throughout its history. It was to him, I may recall, that the original edition of the *Exercises* too is due. With a desire—dangerous, in a small man—for uniformity, he tried to reduce to identity the various current methods of education, philosophical and classical; he picks out and develops specialists. Maldonatus is due to him, and Bellarmine. Even the morning hour of medita-

* Sixty-six of Borgia's spiritual sons won in these few years the crown of martyrdom.

tion, which, on the whole, may be regarded as imposed by him, was so imposed only as the result of many compromises and tentative, temporary arrangements, and even thus, with much liberty left to local custom. The universal element, however, in his action here, is to *mitigate* the customs which an indiscreet fervour, such as his had been, sought to enjoin and stereotype. Similarly, he is now all against numerous and small, and therefore impecunious and understaffed, foundations. His pioneer-enthusiasm is as keen as ever, but his experimental knowledge is increased, and well controls it. Perhaps his greatest of anxieties was the determination of Pius V. to impose the obligation of Choir on the Society; and to raise to the priesthood none but those of its members who were already solemnly "professed." The first of these obligations would severely have hampered the Jesuits' activities; the second, they felt, would restrict grievously the number of their priests, or abolish the whole distinction between professed fathers and "spiritual coadjutors." The Pope held firm: Borgia obeyed unhesitatingly the moment this was clear. Pius and Borgia died within three months of one another in 1572, and in the December of that year Gregory XIII. reversed his predecessor's ruling in these points. But the Society had obeyed.

Borgia, eager to check the Protestant revolution, was active in all that concerned the German-speaking Churches, the corrected edition of the Bible, the translation of the Catechism of Trent. At his inspiration Pius imposed the Profession of Faith upon all Catholic Universities, and composed two congregations of Cardinals to superintend work done for the conversion of heretics and of infidels. In these, the *Propaganda* was in germ. Owing to his amazingly successful financial and medical organization of Rome during the plague of 1566, Pius, on the outbreak of that of 1568, immediately confided to him the administration of the funds for public relief.

It will have been gathered, thus, that Borgia's work was not merely to *stereotype*. He initiated, and joined in initiation. I think it will be allowed that, in this period, genuine advance and development was being made throughout the Church, which was not merely thrown back upon the defensive, but was engaged in perfecting, no doubt, what she possessed, but also in expanding according to her laws of growth and in keeping with what the times made possible and desirable. In this expansion and consolidation it was the Jesuits' privilege to be of service, and Borgia's work

in Europe, as their General, was a substantial factor. In quite the earliest days of the Society, an audacity and initiative display themselves which indeed take our breath away. No doubt, in proportion as such an Institution grows larger, and its members, in consequence, more mediocre, taken individually; and its dangers of distortion more varied—in just that proportion will its functions have to grow more defined, its organism more set, and its possibilities fewer, its need of a particular and circumscribed *way of life* more cogent. But I would insist that, in Borgia, none of the breeziness, the imperial width of view and force of purpose, the sheer *bonhomie* permissible in a man who is a really fearless governor as well as a shrewd one, was diminished. His narrow skull meant no bigotry; his thin lips no fanaticism; until his letters are thoroughly known and appreciated, this may, no doubt, be less popularly patent; but it remains that in them the warm humanity of this great prince, ecclesiastic, and ascetic is permanently shown.

It would be easy to accumulate instances of his thoughtful kindness, but not, as I said, to convey the general impression of grave gentleness, flashed across with buoyant humour, which is offered by his letters. He was insistent on regular and complete holidays being

given to the novices and students; or the discretion with which the austerity of the Tertianship should be observed. "Do not treat the Tertians," he wrote, "as if they were novices." He specially took care of the sensitiveness of the lay-brothers, who bore, as he perceived, the burden of the day. Borgia, who refused to allow his American mission houses to acquire slaves, however well they treated them, was not going to suffer the lay-brothers to be treated as servants. A point of playfulness reveals itself at times. A French Jesuit, such was his piety, felt suddenly inspired to visit Rome. Might he do so . . . and come on foot, and return on foot . . . ? "Your desire," said the General, "is most edifying; but it would be better to come on horseback than on foot, and better still, perhaps, to stay in France for the time being." The ex-courtier was an adept in the skilful refusal of inopportune requests. In fact, a certain *gracefulness* of expression, quite easily to be recognized, gave grounds, perhaps, for the accusation that he was too polite. And I think that a high proportion of his rebukes are, precisely, for *over*-scrupulousness, pettiness, rigorism, or harshness. He finds good points in a number of religious who have been dismissed from, or candidates who have not been admitted to,

the Society; he is endlessly patient with those who, discouraged or nervous, want to leave it. And over rebuke and praise alike, his spirit of constant *prayer* puts not a frost, but a glow. "If only you could see," he writes to a nun urgent for letters, "my business, night and day! I do nothing but read and write letters, deal with rules, constitutions, professors and classes!" These tedious hours, which utterly forbade any protracted prayer, he sanctified by separate consecrations—to Saints and Angels, or to the mysteries of Our Lord's life—which gave as it were a kind of imaginative background, or, again, an interior differentiation, to his work. Nearly every day (except those on which he just writes *Ill*) some spiritual comment on his life is recorded in a diary—so hurriedly written and quaintly abbreviated as to have encouraged, for long, the belief that it was a shorthand. Brief enough its comments are, I confess. I will add one page by way of appendix. Here I can but say that his intercession is for the whole and for the details; that his entering into the intimacies of God and of His Christ is as simple as any child's; that his trust in the supernatural coefficient to human action is supreme and absolute; and that, like a constant refrain, comes the prayer that God will remove him if in each point he is not ruling according to His will.

It was in 1568 that Borgia's health showed definite signs of breaking. Gout had always harassed him. This, and added infirmities, now became an almost permanent, and at times dangerous, infliction. It was in spite of these that he undertook the mission which killed him, in obedience to the Pope.

Pius V. wished to form a coalition of Christian princes against the Turk. In 1571 he despatched Cardinal Commendone to the Emperor Maximilian, with Fr. Toledo, S.J., for assessor; to the Kings of Spain and Portugal, his nephew Cardinal Alessandrino, with Francis Borgia. For Francis, a papal command was final. On June 30, he left Rome. The cumbrous journey across Europe, in mid-heat of summer, exhausted him, but as he approached Spain he recovered somewhat. The King and Ruy Gomez wrote to welcome him; it was his son Ferdinand Borgia who was sent to meet the caravan at the frontier. The Legation journey resolved itself into a triumphant progress for Francis. The usual crowds pressed round him; the usual battles between homage and humility were fought out. Francis refused to go to Gandia; Gandia transported itself in a body to Valencia and watched him move, like a vision, down the streets. . . . Near Madrid, King, Cardinal and nobles came out to meet the

legate, and seemed to see, in Borgia, almost his equivalent. The very Inquisition returned upon its steps and preconized the books it had condemned. It must be owned that the political results of all this enthusiasm were singularly small. On the other hand, in Portugal, where his son Juan was ambassador, Borgia's personal success was considerable, He persuaded the King, Sebastian, to consent at least to marry, and establish his dynasty; he did his best for the Society, which was becoming irretrievably involved in court and political cliques. In December he left, with the Cardinal, for France. Ferdinand, and Francis's younger brother Thomas, who was destined to be Archbishop of Saragossa, accompanied him. At Bayonne he said farewell to Ferdinand, and by way of Bordeaux, reached Blois in February. Charles IX. and Catherine de Medici overwhelmed Borgia with honours, and fooled the Papal legate, politically speaking, to the top of their bent. But Pius V., it was announced, was dangerously ill. The Legation hurried back to Rome. At Lyons, Maldonatus called to salute Borgia, and returned shocked at his condition. He had caught cold saying Mass in a church ruined by the Huguenots; and over and above his natural disgust at being involved in anything so futile

as this legation, he suffered from indescribable depression at the sight of countries devastated by the religious wars which had shrunk from no sacrilege. His illness rapidly increased, and the news of its gravity preceded him. To St. Jean de Maurienne, the Duke of Savoy despatched his court doctors to examine him. They made every mistake, and treated him for dysentery instead of pneumonia. In this deplorable state, and in February, he crossed the Mont Cenis. Travelling but a few miles daily, he arrived at Turin, and summoned strength to venerate the Holy Shroud. At Turin he embarked on a boat which was to take him to Ferrara. Almost at once he grew worse, and fainted. On recovering, he saw that Don Thomas's eyes were full of tears. With a sort of gentle sharpness he reproached him: "If I had not thought you were a man of pluck, I should never have taken you out of Salamanca." At Bassignano, he had to put up some three weeks at a country house: the few leagues between that town and Alessandria were black with pilgrims coming to and fro to see the house where he lodged. At Ferrara, the Duke his nephew came to the river to meet him and press hospitality upon him. Francis at first refused, but became so ill that he had to be moved from the stuffy Jesuit house to a country

place of the Duke's, and there he remained from April 19 to September 3. Here he heard of the death of Pius V.; Don Thomas got the news at Bologna and went straight to Rome, where he was implored to bring St. Francis quickly, for many of the cardinals wanted him for next Pope. Meanwhile relics were being carried in state to heal the dying man. He improved a little, and went to Loretto. All the Society was in prayer for his safe return. At Loretto Thomas rejoined him. He found him possessed by one fixed idea: to return as fast as possible to Rome. Henceforward the determination to reach Rome alone kept him alive. He never left his litter between the two towns, and suffered horribly. Ever sensitive, he would allow no one near it, hating that his moaning should be overheard. He arrived at Rome on September 28. At the gate of Sta Maria del Popolo, he caused the litter to halt, and remained half an hour in prayer. Nadal arrived, and Hernandez insisted that he should go straight to the Professed house, not, as was with selfish piety suggested, carried from one Jesuit house to another to receive greeting. Even at the Gesù, the various communities had gathered at the door to welcome him. He tried to greet each one: "He will die," it was nervously urged, "in our hands." They

carried him to his room. Cardinal after Cardinal came to see him; the new Pope's nephew brought him the Pontifical salutation. He was asked, seeing that death was near, to appoint a Vicar-General. Like Ignatius and Laynez, he refused. He laughed, and said it was enough for him to give account of his own stewardship. He then, on September 30, in the early afternoon, received the Sacraments and asked to be no more visited. For Nadal, Hernandez, Br. Marcos, and Don Thomas he made exceptions, and begged them not to leave him till the end. Hernandez asked if his portrait might be painted. Francis refused. Thomas sat beside him and held his hand. Francis asked him to name each of his children and grandchildren to him, and indeed all his kin, lest his wearied brain should play his memory false. To each name of the long litany, Francis gave his spiritual benediction. Indeed, so attentive was he that at Thomas's plain *Don Juan* he interrupted: "Which?" he asked, "my son or my nephew?" Even servants he did not forget, and recommended to Thomas Anton, the muleteer who long ago had come with him from Gandia to Rome. With Francis, it is worth while to pause, and review, in a flash of imagination, that life's strange scenes—the royal palaces, the viceregal mansion, the castle of Gandia, and now this narrow cell. . . .

He entered, towards evening, his agony and became speechless. Cruelly, the threatened artist was now introduced into the room. Francis kicked with his foot at the coverlet, and would have none of him. The artist retired to a corner behind him and finished his portrait there. Francis never quite lost consciousness, and continued to hold Thomas's hand and repose in great peace till about midnight, when he expired. At the autopsy it was seen that his lungs were in an appalling condition; the last months must have been a nightmare to him, and his last journey a martyrdom. Indomitable will alone had kept him alive till now.

I need not give details of the triumphant canonization of Borgia nor of the return of his relics to Spain, when processions poured daily down the streets, kings' ransoms were flung underfoot or hung from windows or lavished upon statues; Aloysius Gonzaga, Ignatius, Xavier, and Francis Borgia, clothed in black velvet, almost invisible beneath gold embossments and ropes and stars of diamonds and pearls, and crowned with enormous diadems, rode aloft on the shoulders of high noblemen; banners swayed, bells boomed, bombs burst; church vaults were clothed in velvet, their walls with cloth of gold, their floors with oriental rugs. Theatres, superbly decorated

in honour of St. Francis with black and gold, displayed scenes from his life before royal audiences; ballets, masquerades, literary tournaments, waxwork-shows, mimic bull-fights, diversified the days; and the sacred skeleton went to and fro, in continual procession, locked in its huge silver coffin. At night, the cities spouted flames and the velvety Spanish sky was gorgeous with fireworks. High set pieces displayed Francis attacked by devil, world and flesh: the three enemies went down into ashes, Francis remained upright, splendid amid the shouting. Huge castles reared themselves sky-high, and from the topmost pinnacle machinery caused frameworks to expand, and reveal St. Francis in his triumph; sieges of cities, naval combats ended all alike with visions of twin angels, bearing aloft the Gandia coat of arms. At night, rockets were fired upon the crowds, to clear the streets. . . . With this flare and uproar mankind entertained its unconscious guest, throned now above the high altar of a Madrid church, until 1767.

In that year Charles III. evicted the Jesuits from Spain. Into the empty church one veiled visitor used to penetrate, and dust the lonely coffin and give it flowers and tapers. Later, she was known to be the Countess of Benavento, Duchess of Gandia. The church and relics

were granted to the Oratorians in 1769, and the solemn yearly novena made by court and grandees to Francis began again in 1796. In 1809 Cabarrus, minister of Joseph Bonaparte, was pillaging the churches. The silver coffin was painted brown, and, believed to be of bronze, was left alone. For some time Borgia's relics lay in Sant' Antonio, a chapel originally built for him by his grandson, the Duke of Lerma. In 1814, it returned, but when, in 1835 the church was seized by Mendizabal's ruffians, it was taken back to Sant' Antonio, the treasures of two centuries falling into brigands' hands. In 1890 it had once more to emigrate, and the Duke of Medina Celi gave it a home in the Church of Jesus Nazareno. The servants carried the heavy chest through the night of May 2; eight priests and a score of women followed it. Finally, before daybreak on July 30, 1901, the body was brought secretly, in a carriage, to the Jesuit Church, new-built upon so many ruins.

Here then may in solitude be visited that man whose thronged life was in reality lived so utterly alone, and who, beneath the fierce relentless light, knew himself still to be unseen. In Francis Borgia is all the human tragedy of the isolated spirit, moving untainted, like Christ, amid the jostling crowd, and all the

splendour of the God-indwelt soul, supremely companioned all the while, and imparting its virtue to those who with the lightest touch of faith enter into communion with its secret. Such may our contact be. And in him too, for all his renunciation of this and that, his flights, his refusals, is the gallant forward march of one so bent on God, that even the world through which he moves clings in its own despite to his shaken garments and finds itself transformed. Francis thought he placed his Borgian coronet on a skull with empty eyes and grinning teeth; but his spirit, if we invoke it, has power not in its heavenly life alone, but to make even these dry bones live.

EXTRACTS FROM ST. FRANCIS'S SPIRITUAL DIARY.

[*February*, 1564.]

4*th*.—To-day, 13 full years since I left Rome for Spain [Feb. 4, 1551].

6*th*—In days of consolation.

(1) Thanksgiving. (2) I asked especially for [. . .] the love of the ✠. (4) The 3 first hours of the day, I asked the Father during prayer, the Son during Mass, the Holy Spirit afterwards. (5) I asked the grace of taking bodily food *ut decet*. (6) To act rightly in [. . .] and other necessary things. (7) And in sleep. (8) And in other necessary things. (9) At Mass I asked as I took up the Host. (10) *Audiam quid loquatur in sacris*. (11) And *I* am without wound! [. . .] That nothing possess my heart and prevent me from loving Jesus Christ. (16) Distaste for worldly honours. (17) Love of my neighbour, with the love with which Jesus Christ loved him [. . .]. (24) For the Pope an union with Borromeo. [This was the year of Borromeo's change of life.]

8*th.*—*Ut fieri solet:* Consider what Jesus Christ felt when they struck Him.

9*th.*—[. . .] (3) I asked for peace between the ambassadors.

[*June.*]

10*th.*—To-day, the 10th anniversary of the cross they gave me at Tordesillas [he was made Commissary General of Spain, 10th June, 1554], I began the following exercise with devotion and spiritual consolation: Every 3 hours I offer my thanks to the Divine Persons, for the 4th vow I have made in the Company, and in the name of some one of the attributes of God our Saviour, thanking, offering myself, and asking a share in the attributes for myself and others.

1*st Hour, till* 3.—I gave thanks (for the holiness) of the Father, the Son, and the H. Spirit. I offered myself, just as I am, with confusion, to go to India or Constantinople, and to die for Him who is my God [. . .]. From 3 to 6 o'clock. I gave thanks for the glory of the Father, Son, and H. Spirit. I offered myself *ut dictum est.* I asked to do everything for their greater glory, as the Founder understood it, Master Ignatius of holy memory, and as we, his sons, ought to try to. (6) I gave thanks for the eternity [. . .]. (9) I gave thanks for the immensity of the Father, Son, and H. Spirit . . . I asked an unlimited love, part of the infinite love. (12) I gave thanks for the all-power of the Father, Son, and H. Spirit. I offered [. . .] I asked to be all-powerful in Him [. . .]. *Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat.* (15) I gave thanks, considering *qui erat, qui est, et qui venturus est,* for what He has done for me and for what, I hope, He still will do. I offered myself [. . .] I asked to prepare myself for His coming. (18) [The Trinity as *fons vitæ.* Life in Him]. (21) I gave thanks, considering the *Ego sum qui sum,* whence proceeds the being communicated to all creatures [. . .] I asked that all the being I had received from Him might be used in His service. Amen! (24) And so this day concluded.

[*September.*]

29*th.*—Ask these 7 things: the reform of the Church; the progress of the Society in Spain; a remedy to the troubles in Europe: *id.* in Asia and Greece; the conversion of the heathen, the Lutherans, the Jews and the Moors: *Ut fiat unum ovile et unus pastor: ut fiat voluntas tua sicut in cælo et in terra. Id.* After mass, ✠ great consolation, and hope that God will accept the sacrifice.

October 24*th.*—*Id.* E✠E✠E✠*Fuit magna consolatio et spes et confusio! Et alia multa! Laus Deo!* . . . *Id.*, I asked for a number of things. *Id.* Everything that has already been asked for . . . New life. Thanksgiving for salvation. New ways of working in all. *Laus Deo.*

[1565.]

July 2*nd.*—E✠Consolation. *Dies meæ Crucis* [Day of my Cross. He was elected General. E appears to stand for outbursts of feeling, usually consoling].

10*th.*—*Id.* I asked, each hour of the day, the following graces: (1) What Jesus Christ asked. (2) That He will take me or give me strength to govern. (3) The affair of the procurator [Araoz, who could not be got out of Spain]. (4) The affair of Malta [It was besieged by the Turks]. (5) I offer myself for the Society, blood and life—without counting what else I commended [to God].

27*th.*—I have asked to see, in the Lord, His works [. . .]. *Id.* Hope that the Lord will help the works of the Society, and that He will help me in it. I asked Him to take me. *Id.* That, in Jesus Christ, I may feel what He felt for His sheep.

August 1*st.*—*Idem* E✠*Ego ero tecum.*

4*th.*—*Id.* I asked Him to grant me what I asked Him for the government of the Society, or to take me. Hope [. . .]. *Id.*, hope to be heard.

25*th.*—Grace to carry the ✠ or that He may take me. *Id.*, for Polanco.

[1566.]

May 1.—With the Empress, rejoicing in what the Lord worked in her and in me by her death. . . . Hope. . . .

[1567.]

May 1*st and* 28*th.*—Since the death of the Empress . . . [I asked] to get out of scruples and walk in *simplicitate cordis.*

ST. JOHN FRANCIS REGIS*

1597—1640

It is hard to be certain why St. Francis Regis exercises so strong an influence on the imagination, and leaves on us so deep an impression of personality. Little enough is known of him; his biographies are short; padded, to an extent unusual even at the period of their composition, with platitude; monotonous in their repetitions of good deeds done; and quite singularly lacking in psychology. It might even be asked whether it be not just the stage-setting, so to speak, of his activity—the amazingly romantic town of Le Puy, where he spent his summers, and the frozen fastnesses of the Velay, where he preached missions, all the winter, which lend him, as actor in that scene, a glamour not his own. Yet there are other names, proper to that period and even to that environment, well

* Besides Daubenton, I have used little save M. Joseph Vianney's admirable *St. François Régis*, ed. ii., which corrects a number of dates and adds many valuable details of general history.

enough known and deriving much substance from many documents, which leave us unattracted. Possibly, we may draw a hint from that mingling of extreme gentleness with robust, almost grim, virility which cannot but be felt to exist in him. Gentleness and hardihood—to what does that recall a sensitive imagination? To St. Louis and the Crusades? Possibly. Joinville lays an irresistible spell upon his readers; the keen breeze of chivalry blows brightly through his pages; yet albeit his mellowed years, and perhaps his temperament, soften without emasculating his picture of the rugged King; albeit a touch of tender idealizing belongs to him, which is lacking in the far harder history of, say, Villehardouin, whose initiative Joinville carries on, it is behind both of these historians we must go. We must appeal, I think, to the Arthur legend itself if we are to find the spiritual atmosphere which is most closely associated (paradoxical as it may seem) with these missioners of Brittany and still more of mountainous Southern France in the dying sixteenth century. At every stage the Arthur legend was lifted further into the golden skies of romance; such harsh reality as formed its nucleus might be singularly unsympathetic to modern feeling; yet as constant and indeed ever more potent elements in its

tales of Chivalry are to be discerned that gentleness and that strength which are so notably combined in nearly all, it may be, of the Saints, but especially, perhaps, in a career like that of Regis. Are not Regis and his fellow-missioners, of whatever Order or ecclesiastical status, the "real reality" of those old civilizing Knights of whom poets have offered us the glorious, haloed images? Trivial as one man's subjective evidence is bound to be, yet I will confess to feeling, as I close a Life of a Regis or a Mannoir, as though I had been reading some new *Idylls of the King*. Regis, fighting his way through black forests where the only light struck upwards from fallen snow; Regis, hauling himself along, foot by foot, among the ice-sheathed crags; snowed-up, for whole days, in abandoned stone-piled cabins, with no sound in his ears at night save the howling of the wolves, and the certainty that if he might at all win out to human habitation, often as not it would be "wolf-like men, worse than wolves," he should encounter—assuredly it is the "Quests" of Arthur's Knights that he sets actual and substantial before us. Or perhaps, after all, the explanation of his thrilling charm is deeper and yet simpler. When King Arthur had, after administering the Vows of the Round Table to

his Knights, explained to them his Ideal, and the enormous enterprise that they, with him, were now sworn to grapple with, "I beheld," writes the modern poet,

> "From eye to eye through all their Order flash
> A momentary likeness of the King."

Enterprise and adventure there was, enough and to spare, during all these centuries, in France. Does it fail finally to grip us just because, after all, it had not Christ for soul? And even as all literature grew insipid to Augustine which had not somewhere in it the Name of Jesus, so perhaps these Saints act thrillingly upon the souls with which they come in contact, not for this or for that, but simply because they are Saints, in vital and organic contact, that is, with that source of life which is Jesus Christ? In pages, then, which may contain not even a portrait, but some not too fantastic silhouette or sketch of Regis, may it be that we lay hold of the extremest hem of his Master's healing robe.

I.

Τεηχεῖ' ἀλλ' ἀγαθὴ κουροτρόφος.

"Rugged is Ithaca, but a good nurse of men."
HOMER.

HARSH almost to savagery was the region in which the boy was born. The mountains inland from Narbonne are stripped and stony. The summer glare is fiery without glow; the heat vibrations quiver upward from glistening surfaces of rocks. From this furnace-heat, which might have been feared as destined to unstring the nerves and will, winter plunges you into headlong icy winds; and the country-folk's physique, at last accustomed to these alternating trials, has developed a power of resistance destined to stand Regis in good stead, when he will spend his summers in the sweltering volcanic plain of Le Puy, migrating for the winter months, when warmth might have been hoped for, to desolate mountain ranges where the snow lay deep, at times, a good score of feet.

And this angry land was haunted by fit

memories. To the south you could see the Pyreneean peak which still bore the name of Alaric the Visigoth. The Saracens, after him, had swept all that region, conquering towns like Narbonne belonging to that Roman civilization older yet than Saracen or Visigoth, and destined to outlive, in site and name and power, both Visigoth and Saracen. And they who should evict these invaders were the heroes of those Chansons de Geste which make, in a manner, an older Arthur-epic for the land of France.

Solidly established in this land, the Regis family can be watched developing itself. Without the flamboyant splendours of nobility, or the pathetic or even tragic romance of poverty to adorn it, it lived a rugged middle life, acquiring field by field at Fontcouverte, not far from Carcassonne, to the south-east. Notaries were these simple heads of the family, for the most part, it would seem, till towards the middle or the end of the sixteenth century its two branches, by marriage and purchase, gained the right to be qualified as nobles. John Regis, in fact, father of John Francis, when he married Margaret of Cugunhan in 1576, then first added a title to his name; and his brother Bartholomew purchased in 1602 the ruined château of Fontcouverte from the

Abbot of La Grasse, and, finding its restoration beyond his means, obtained leave to add to his own modest house that turret and dovecote which were held necessary to convert it into the "château"—the "big house," as we should say, of that tiny district. A naïve charm clings to this history of the sober and circumspect climbing of these country-folk. It displays all that tenacity of tradition and convention, coupled with that determination not to cease until the old-established elements shall have thrust themselves well out and round, and can promise to themselves a decent and undisputed place in suns as yet unrisen, which certainly makes for permanence. Theirs was no sudden dash forward of the *nouveau riche*, anxious for the glory of the present and the hasty covering of all past traces. The lord and lady of the squat little house, still standing, will have worked unhesitatingly, when need required it, alongside of their people, in field or kitchen; and if French was spoken by them on, as it were, state occasions, it is probable that the patois, always so familiar to the missioner-saint's tongue, was the habitual talk of his clan.

Violent shocks, however, assaulted this family of oak and granite. The forces of religious revolution, which had been gathering

in Southern France for years, burst forth in violent explosion in 1560. Nîmes, Annonay, and Montpellier became centres of hideous violence; churches and convents were sacked or demolished; men went already in terror of their lives. Sacrilege was joined to fire and blood; on to a huge bonfire lit in the middle of Nîmes Cathedral the Blessed Sacrament, stolen from every unemptied tabernacle, was thrown. After two years of carnage, a breathing space was granted. But the passions for blood and bestiality, deliberately unchained by the Protestant revolutionaries, had fastened their claws well into the brains of whole masses of men little enough concerned with religious ideals, and were poisoning the very processes of their souls. When the Protestant Condé, in 1567, gave the signal for a renewing of the war, no limit could be set to wanton onslaught and reprisal and again reprisal. No village but was become two camps; no town which had not seen, as first-fruits of its capture, the massacre of half its leading men. Even when, exhausted, men patched up a peace, hordes of brigands, starving in the intermission of plunder or just weary of inactivity, would give themselves the name of whichever religious party was, for the hour, undermost, and

fall on the blood-drained town, and bleed it yet more white.

The " League " for the defence of the Catholic religion was proclaimed in 1585, and with the death of the Catholic Henri III., and the accession of Henri de Bourbon of Navarre, still Huguenot, prospects of peace seemed chimerical. In fact, there were forthwith created two Languedocs, frontiered by the river Orb, on whose banks, town by town, fighting was consequently focussed. John and Bartholomew Regis joined the League, and Peter Regis, their cousin, held the upper and Catholic part of Carcassonne against the lower town, given over to the Huguenots, till in 1591 he saw that party conquered. He was killed next year at Villemar on the Tarn and buried at La Grasse. He had gone to fight against the will of John Regis, his father, who had in fact cursed him and wished him ill-luck and invoked God's vengeance on him. At the sight of his returning coffin, however, the old man broke down, and forgave his son, too late.

But the country itself lay dying. The King, summing up the political situation, decided where the centre of religious gravity must lie, made himself a Catholic, and at Folembray, in 1596, came definitely to terms with Languedoc. Less than a year later, John Francis Regis was

born in the old house at Fontcouverte, its walls still echoing with the rumours of these wars, wars fought centuries ago, wars scarcely yet made end of; and the long winter evenings, while the little boy grew older, were spent thrillingly by the big family of masters and men, gathered round one fire, in the recital of no faded reminiscences.

In this setting, then, grim enough, upon the whole, the boy began his life. You might have fancied, at first, that here precisely was an instance of environment overshooting, as it were, its mark, and producing its own opposite. Thus, an austere upbringing may brace and harden a boy of normal temperament; but it may break and for ever weaken an oversensitive lad, too delicate to stand rough handling. It was noticeable that Francis cried often and easily; he displayed a tendency to become cowed; and under the rather rough treatment of some village schoolmaster, with whom he did lessons, he ran the risk of becoming one of those lonely children, ever on the defensive, into whose inner life only the most tactful may end by penetrating. His mother, however, a wise person, soon saw why her small son was making no sort of progress, and changed his tutor. The boy, not seriously injured yet, thenceforward throve, and passed

on, fairly young, to the Jesuits' College at Béziers, not far distant.*

At Béziers, the impressionable lad began to take, almost too exactly, it might have been thought, the suggested character. At that age it still cannot be judged, as a rule, of what stuff a boy is made; that he flow readily into the regulation mould may prove nothing save a radical lack of personality; that he be pious and find delight in prayer, may turn out to have been only that form of romanticism to which his years and guarded imagination were susceptible. It was suggested to Francis that he must be "recollected" and devout; so he never played games: his reputation grew, and he administered spiritual counsel to his school-

* One anecdote survives not lacking in a kind of extrinsic interest. The boy was about five when, one day, he ran happily up to his mother exclaiming that he was damned. "Dearest!" cried the puzzled lady, "what do you mean?" "Au ciel!" he answered gleefully. "Je suis damné au ciel." Labroue, his earliest biographer, quite well saw that he did not know the meaning of his words. In later years his mother reminded him of this episode, and the boy, oversensitive, by then, to meanings even unintended, began to cry. In another generation the tale was told thus: "Mother," he had one day cried, "je suis damné." Forthwith the meaning of the word was explained to him. "O ciel!" the terrified child exclaimed, and fainted. . .

fellows and started, in the lodging-house where he and a few others put up, a sort of pious conventicle, with prayers in common, reading at meals, and much visiting of churches for its rule. An amazing view extended from the lofty college terrace over the rich plain, to mountains on that side, sea on this. It is said that Francis Regis refused even to look at it. It is by results that we have to judge these early experiments. The boy might have had in him the makings of a first-rate prig; he might have squandered, early thus, his best emotions, and passed from his teens into a dulled and inelastic adolescence; he might have strained his unlucky nature so severely, that from effervescent piety he might have moved, as it were, instantaneously, into violent rebellion and thence to cynicism. As it was, we find hints of nervous strain; he walks in his sleep, and awakes on the very brink of the river Orb; he sickens with a nervous fever, but recovers, and finds himself, at eighteen, ready to pass, as it were, without any atmospheric break, into the Jesuit noviciate at Toulouse.* On December 8, then, 1616, he put

* It is interesting, however, to note that of his schoolfellows one only followed him to the Jesuits. All the rest who entered religion joined Dominicans, or one or other of the branches of Franciscans. St. John Berchmans joined the noviciate in the same year as Regis.

on the Jesuit habit and never, afterwards, looked back.

His Jesuit training pursued itself equably. He took his vows as usual, after some two years' noviciate, and during his studies left no very detailed impression on the memories of his confrères. In 1618 he studied rhetoric for a year at Cahors, and then taught grammar for three at Billom. While studying philosophy at Tournon, where he went in 1622, he displayed at once the early promise of his future career and certain indications of grit and power in his exceptionally energetic work among the local peasantry. Jesuit students then had more scope for directly apostolic work than they have now. Regis preached regular missions in quite a number of villages and little towns near Tournon; and the priest, whose companion he was, asserted that he found little left to do but to hear the confessions of penitents whom Regis had beaten up. He founded in nearly all these places a Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, and altogether did much more directly spiritual work than would nowadays be thought possible for a young cleric in minor Orders only.

His period of studies, thus diversified, lasted for three years. In 1625 he was sent to teach a low class in the Jesuit College at Le Puy for

two years; then for one in that of Auch. At Le Puy all his town-work was afterwards to lie. He impressed the boys who came under him deeply, not (I do not think it is an error to deduce) by any very brilliant literary and scientific gifts, for these seem never to have been his, but by the absolute self-devotion with which he gave up all his time to them, his plodding industry, noticeable in the preparation of his school-work, and his solid virtue never once caught off its guard. His grief, when a boy in his class was once detected in a grave fault, proved not easily forgotten.

In 1628 he went to Toulouse for his theology, and in 1631 was ordained priest.* It is interesting to observe that a certain disturbance of equilibrium declared itself in him about this time. At one moment he felt scared at the whole idea of proceeding to the priesthood, and had to be ordered by his Superior to advance fearlessly to the natural goal of his years of preparation. Forthwith he became all eagerness to have the rite accomplished, and persuaded his Superior to get the date of his ordination advanced, promising to say thirty Masses for him if he should succeed.

* This date makes it probable that his request to be allowed to attend to the plague-stricken was made before his ordination; and that leave was refused.

He knew that this would mean the sacrifice of his "profession," that is, of admission into the ranks of those whose four solemn vows constitute them, as it were, the essential nucleus of the Society of Jesus, and bind the Society as closely to the individual as he is bound to it. He was, however, contented to remain, as it is called, a "spiritual coadjutor" of his fellows, and so, in fact, remained.

He proceeded immediately after this to what is called the tertianship, a kind of third year of noviciate, during which the soul, dried up, as it were, by the past few years, is to refresh its sap and prepare for yet wider activities. This period of seclusion was, however, interrupted by an order he received from Rome, bidding him visit his family at Fontcouverte, to assist in settling certain legal difficulties in which his brothers were involved. In this he presumably succeeded; he considerably flurried, however, that respectable neighbourhood by his unconventional methods of conducting a mission in the village. Of these methods I shall have to speak later on; here it is enough to say that he exasperated his brothers by finding himself unable to set foot outside the door without being mobbed and followed about by a troop of children and of beggars, and was hooted by

some soldiers belonging to a regiment quartered there for the winter when he was perceived to cross the market-place carrying a large mattress on his back. His relatives, doubly sensitive, perhaps, owing to their intermediate social position, so to call it, recently and not yet quite solidly established, implored the young priest to remember that he was a gentleman and not to make them the laughing-stock of the countryside, and displayed, in fact, no very keen desire to keep him on their premises.

Francis showed much good temper and appears to have made friends not only with his brothers, but with the barracks, and the spiritual results at Fontcouverte were so excellent that after a very brief interlude spent as prefect in the college of Pamiers, authority set him definitely aside for a missionary career.

II.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach good tidings."—Isaiah lii. 7.

Regis initiated his missionary work in the university town of Montpellier just ten years after Louis XIII. had had to besiege the town in person, in consequence of a recrudescence of religious revolution. Worship and morals had to be laboriously reconstructed, and the Jesuits began their share in this work in 1629. Regis anticipated here, from the outset, it would appear, all that he was to make perfect, later on, in the way of spiritual and social work at Le Puy. He began by preaching; and his sermons, stripped entirely of those extraordinary conventions of the period which were supposed to create a style "worthy of the pulpit," attracted astonished crowds. Regis quoted no Latin or Greek mythology; he juggled with no names of ancient kings and senators, nor drew comparisons between contemporary Languedoc and classical Rome or Athens; he cared little enough about the rules of rhetoric, and made no display of erudition,

leaving the theologians and fathers to their proper work of having taught him orthodoxy, and realizing that the starving multitudes were not to be fed on the customary dishes of such over-spiced and heavy food. People of all classes were spellbound, and besieged the Jesuits' church; conventionalists, old, and especially young, were inclined to be scandalized. Youth, when it has correct behaviour for fetish, is quite unforgiving; and a young religious, who felt he could preach much better than Regis, took him to task one day for his awkward sentences and his lapses into colloquialism. Warming to his work, he ended by losing his head completely, and frankly ridiculing the clumsy-tongued apostle for his provincial boorishness. The unfortunate priest is said not only to have taken the rebuke in good part, which a sense of humour might sufficiently have enabled him to do, but actually to have tried the experiment of preaching a regulation sermon, with its proper parts properly arranged, suitably patched with purple, and elegantly embroidered with extracts and allusions. The audience displayed patience, ready to believe that what Fr. Regis did was right; but, for all that, the church remained chill, and Regis returned to his habit of suffering the Spirit on his lips to speak with

unfettered power. Moreover, his youthful critic felt he had behaved like a prig, and came to apologize. "How quickly," Regis answered, smiling, "you regret the kind turn you did me!" However, the young man could never think, after that, of his little act of interference without blushing, even when alone. . . .

There was little enough organized charity, even in this seventeenth century; or especially then, perhaps. It might almost be argued that "philanthropy" was better engineered in the thirteenth—that brisk century of beginnings, where so much was vigorously initiated which, in the overripe years to come, was destined to decay.

Regis established a Ladies' Prison Committee; he chartered certain doctors to keep a percentage of their time at the free disposal of the indigent sick; he already began to set on foot, after the example of St. Ignatius, a Magdalens' Asylum; and you may gauge how irrepressible was his optimism by his determination wholly to rid this large town, whither medical students flocked in thousands, of the spectacle of public vice. All this, however, was of the nature of experiment rather than of finished work. But you will see how straight he moves for the important points,

and how anxious he is that his work should be made permanent.

In the winter, when the ill weather kept the peasants off their fields, he started his missions in the surrounding villages. Here, too, we get specimens of all that will regularly befall him, or be done by him, when, later, he gets properly into his stride.

In the winter of 1632–33 he used Sommières as his headquarters. The town had been wholly protestantized. In 1625 not more than twenty-five or thirty Catholics were left. Regis preached before Mass, and again in the evening, and catechized the children daily. Whatever time was not spent in the Confessional he devoted to visiting. When the little town was sufficiently responsive, he would leave early in the morning, and walk to neighbouring villages, visiting too every lonely hovel he might see, talking patois, unconscious of sight or sound which might harrass a sensibility too delicate. The district had never seen anything like him. He took it by storm, and in these ice-bound months reaped a vast harvest.

I.

Before Regis could actually begin his residence at Le Puy, his imagination was to be filled with pictures yet more vivid and varied, and his experience made adequate for all future demands upon it. In 1633 Mgr. de la Baume de Suze, Bishop of Viviers, obtained the assistance of two Jesuits, one of them Regis, in a missionary tour round his diocese. The fact of this tour indicates, in itself, a determined set towards improvement. Protestantism would never have made the progress it did, in Southern France or elsewhere, had it not been for the low ebb of Catholic feeling and instruction. This was due in great measure to the selfish indolence of the clergy and especially of the higher clergy. Bishops are nearly all of them absentees; at important reunions, meant to deal with political or religious affairs of the first gravity, they will not trouble to be present, nor even to get their Vicar-Generals to represent them. Town after town addresses its petitions to exalted quarters that their Bishop may at least from time to time be present in his diocese. And the subalterns mimic their superior officers. Priors and abbots wander far afield; parish priests are unknown to their own parishioners.

Mgr. de la Suze had the intention of leaving no tiniest village of his diocese unvisited. By tracks still in use among the country-folk, the Bishop and his adjutants climbed mountains which were then clothed from head to foot in chestnut forests, but are bare now, and pasture-land at best. Suddenly the woods would open; the track would turn into paved paths among the heather; perched on some crag, or lined along some mountain terrace, a village would show itself, with its stone roofs, its unmortared walls, its ancient church grown indistinguishable from the rocks themselves. Savage were the people who dwelt here; downright brigands were their lords; incredible stories of barbarous butchery to be followed by black poverty, year by year throughout this period, stain our picture of the Vivarais with blood and black. The very elements of civilization had gone under in lust and murder, at the date when Folembray, in 1596, gave a true reform its opportunity. De la Suze and Regis were not first in the field. Already, in '1599, Bishop Jean de l'Hostel had visited his desolate diocese. Capuchins, Friars Minor, and Jesuits, had already worked there, and even had been martyred there.

It seems to have fallen to Regis to act as a kind of Baptist to his Bishop. He went a day

or two before the little procession of priests and dignitaries, and prepared the country-folk for his advent. Everywhere on foot, neglectful of no most sordid nook, preaching wherever a step or stone could give him prominence, Regis did the rough work, so to say; and made ready a welcome for the Bishop when, arriving on his mule, not without at least some sign of splendour, he should administer Confirmation to his flock and seal conversion with the Eucharist.

Besides the apostolate of the flock, that of the shepherds was entrusted to the Jesuit. It was thus that his first grave trial, too, befell him. Not all priests, in the Vivarais, were merely timorous. Many were downright traitors to their calling, and lived a life which was one long scandal to the laity. Others, coarsened merely by long residence in this wilderness where a few mountain peasants alone encountered them, had felt the divine fire die within them and asked only for that crass idleness which they miscalled peace. Indignant with the sudden intrusion of St. Regis, they formed a cabal and denounced him to the Bishop for a meddlesome priest, setting families by the ears, interfering in private concerns, pouring personal invective from the pulpit, outstripping his commission, and damaging

the very cause which the Bishop had put him to advance. The Bishop was angry; he summoned Regis; he told him that he was asking his Superiors to recall him without scandal and teach him how not to be enthusiastic. Regis bowed and accepted the decision, which, as a matter of fact, was soon enough reversed, and he found himself replaced with honour in his old position. There had been good counsellors enough to explain the inner history of the onslaught.

So, in a few words, went the episode of the first attack on the Saint's methods. To a man as sensitive as he, and as passionately and purely eager to do good work for God, the trial must have been searching and bitter. But at no point did he fail in doing the better thing, and the whole affair was soon enough forgotten. Yet the experience gave force to the petitions with which throughout his life he assailed his Superiors, that he might be sent altogether away from this old country of France, with its problems and its ties, and devote his whole life to the rising missions of Canada.

The General of the Jesuits was gracious, congratulated him upon his zeal, exhorted him to perseverance, and held out hopes that the

future might perhaps contain the accomplishment of his desires.*

His apostolate in the Vivarais was, however, to continue for the while. The district called Les Boutières, seen from the summit of Mount Mézena, has been described as the sea in its fury petrified. Its gigantic waves of rock, ragged ridges, twisting suddenly, cleft suddenly, into chasms, and each fit for an ambuscade, seemed to promise that war, once there on foot, would never have an end. If it must be said with truth that from these mountains, not the religious wars alone, but, later, the Revolution itself, drew their worst fanatics, it is true, too, to say that in these natures, tamed but not emasculated, the most superb qualities were to be detected; it is said that in the tragic

* These brief résumés of profound emotional and spiritual crises recall irresistibly to my mind Mr. Boyd Cable's splendid book, *Between the Lines*. The daily war communiqués tell us in a word or two that a hundred yards of trenches have changed hands, that a mine has been sprung, that there has been desultory fighting on a wide front—and how much of life and death and heroism do those mean sentences disguise! It is idle to read these anecdotes about men like Regis unless the eye is made to pause, and the imagination given time to vivify the dead words until the emotions themselves reverberate to their shock. Not otherwise will the Saints live again for us, and, by vital contact, alter the rhythm of our own lives.

year 1871, the troops drawn from the Vivarais were one of the best glories of the French army. But when Regis came there, despite the zealous labours of some recent predecessors, the conditions were appalling. In 1583, Nicolas de Vesc, Vicar-General of the diocese, assured his Bishop, after a visitation, that religious rites had been abandoned there for twenty years, and the churches lay in ruins. In fact, things went from bad to worse. Men made bets of a few halfpence that they could shoot persons whom they saw advancing at no great distance, and brought them down "like bird on bough." No one dared go to market or public place save armed; no quarrel finished save by help of arquebus or dagger. In ruined Privas, one hundred brigand bands had their headquarters; the local lords regarded the women of whole districts as their proper prey. Into what seemed one huge shambles, priest after priest had plunged, and Regis at last, in company with a valiant evangelist, Fr. Broquin, made his entry. Early in 1635, he invaded those starving mountains, lucky to get a little milk and water, some bread and walnuts, for his sustenance, taking no more than three hours' sleep in the twenty-four, finding, in that winter, grown traditional for its severity, that the streams had become furious

torrents and the pathways streams, and that the snowdrifts made each step precarious. Once, indeed, so violent was the snowfall, that he was caught as in a trap within the tiny hut where he had taken shelter, and there, sleeping on the beaten earth, eating black bread alone, was held fast prisoner for three weeks. Even to-day the weather conditions of those parts appear fantastic. Huge stones rest on the roofs to prevent the blizzards carrying them away; poles, twenty feet high, are planted by the roadside that, their tip projecting over the snow, they still may show to the traveller his direction; tunnels have to be dug, from one buried house to another, that men may meet their fellows. The very crosses by the way-side or in the market-places, all of iron though they be, have their arms bound this side and that by chains to solid clamps, lest the wind, which hurls an unwary traveller from his feet by a single gust, should twist the metal.

Every winter from 1635 to 1640, through conditions like these, Regis fought his way, since then alone he could find the inhabitants together, scattered else at their field-labour over wide areas. However many miles he had to walk, and the leagues ran up to ten and even twenty, he never missed his appointed hour, even when, having slipped into some

hidden ravine, he had had to haul himself up to the path once more, hand over hand; even when he had to crawl, on hands and knees, over long tracts of rock where ice had made an upright course impossible. He crept thus eight hours, on one occasion, slipping from what seemed solid pathway, and was really stone wall between two fields, into the drifts on either side; climbing back on to it again, finding the narrow edge of stone less difficult to creep along than the treacherous earth with its sudden pitfalls, just to preach one sermon he had promised. He carried with him, for a whole day's rations, a few apples only, and even of these he made his meal but late, since he had leave to say Mass, when circumstances called for it, at one o'clock in the afternoon. At three in the morning he would start from his headquarters, and late at night return, through woods illuminated only by the reflection of the snows, silent with the icy loneliness of winter, or, worse still, echoing on all sides with the long-drawn howls of wolves.

Perhaps it is out of proportion that the imagination should first of all be impressed, in connection with Regis, by this *mise en scène* of snow-smothered forests, ice-sheathed rock-paths, stony villages perched on incredible crags beneath black skies ablaze with frosty stars.

Still, it is with scenes like these that Regis is first and foremost, for many minds, associated; nor is it rash to suppose that many, too, of that place and time must beyond all else have been thunderstruck by the spectacle of this gaunt man, appearing suddenly from wolf-haunted woods, and plunging into them once more when night returned to reawaken their ravenous noises; of this priest in a black cassock torn with brambles and clinging to his limbs, drenched in the mountain torrents when the frosts had not already congealed its folds into rigidity; this figure, fantastic at first and spectre-like, with its bloodless face, blazing eyes, and straggling beard and hair. But indescribably gentle, too, those eyes are said to have been; and the lips, which could utter such terrible denunciation, endlessly kind to cheer; and the rough hands could heal, for the grace of God was with them.

It was this grace, more than any romantic adornments of his apostolate, more even than the fascination of austerity—for this acts upon the delicately nurtured and the softened sentiment of towns—which drew whole villages to his feet. Tales of prominent heretics converted, of notorious sinners sanctified, of the indifferent awakened, recur and recur in the pages of his Lives. They shall not be repeated

here; nor yet shall I try to trace any map of his journeyings from village to village, with their picturesque names unfamiliar in form even to the rest of France—Fay-le-Froid, Saint-Bonnet-le-Froid, Le Cros de Géovaud, Sanhes, Saint-Martin-de-Valamas, Saint-André-des-Effangéas, Marlhes-en-Forez, Saint-Julien-Molin-Molette. It is enough to have in imagination the picture of those strange migrations of a whole hamlet at a time—groups of men and women who, having tramped, as once, some thirty miles, by roads which were no roads, throughout the night, reached him, and claimed Confession, just as his Mass and morning sermons were over; of the bands of anxious pilgrims who would encounter him on his own excursions, and stop him, pile up some stones to serve for a confessional, and keep him there, his feet in the snow, as much as four hours at a stretch; and of those other crowds, descried from afar, a black patch moving upon the snowy hillside. "Who are these?" the question would be asked. "It must be the Saint," would be the answer. "Crowds follow him, till they can go no farther." Crowds, too, would come forth from town and village when his advent was announced; crowds waited in churches and outside them, when it was hoped he might be on his way to speak to them; and

it would happen that till six o'clock in the evening, Communion was being given out by Regis to these mountain-folk, barely awake to the simplest summons of civilization, yet well aware of their soul's hunger for what was better still, and ready to fast, all those long cold hours, for the Bread of Life.

Thus Regis, being lifted up with Christ, was drawing all things to himself, in that savage country which he had made his Holy Land; and, having drawn them, handed them on to the Christ at whose church door he was one night found kneeling, on the frozen stone. His forehead was bowed on the oak and iron door, in a prayer from which he scarcely could be shaken by the parish priest who had searched and found him there—a priest terrified lest the bitter midnight should drive its blades of ice into the very marrow of the kneeling man. But Regis carried his fire within himself; he was complete, as it were, in himself, a finished fortress founded on a rock, and the winds and floods might beat on him, but could not move his soul, nor, till God's hour struck, weaken his disregarded body.

II.

For one who passes rapidly from Middle France into the volcanic circle of which the centre is Le Puy, and who then leaves it as quickly, to cross the ridges beyond which lies the true South, the impression left by the ancient town borders almost on the fantastic. The round plain is ridged with the cones and dramatic teeth of mountains where black rock and bright red earth and vivid green vines put an angry colouring; and the plain itself is broken by abrupt and tremendous crags, egg-shaped, like the sugar-loaf rock at Rio, or just the enormous shapeless block to which the ancient houses of Le Puy cling like a crust of limpets. No acropolis of Athens makes so sheer a mass, no Edinburgh Castle on its precipitous foundation is so impressive; it is true that the towering statue of Mary, cast of the cannons of Sebastopol, was not there for Regis to do homage to; nor the lesser effigy of St. Joseph on its lesser rock. But the town was more self-contained; its huddled houses were practically confined to the giant crag itself; none but tiny streets, that were more truly stairways, climbed, step after step of lava, to the Cathedral on its half-way ledge.

Into the mists of the earliest Christian ages

stretch the legends of the earliest Cathedral; in the architecture of the fortress-church now standing work of every century, from the fifth to the fifteenth, is to be seen. Grim in black and white, it displays a kind of audacious ornament, the invention of artists whose brains were strong as well as subtle, whose patron-priests were warriors and mighty lords as well as ministers of grace. Centre of the oldest pilgrimage of Mary, it may almost be, in France, it drew to it twice, at least, Charlemagne, once in the very year, 800, of his coronation; no chapter of French history but has its especial link with it, and in it Regis often preached. In it, he too, now, has his altar; and, for one privileged to have said his Mass there, the memory of his grimly-tender presence haunting those black vaults through whose heavy-arched windows even the summer's sun was filtered into twilight, will not easily grow faded.

Le Puy, during the religious wars, was politically Catholic: the Black Virgin preserved around her shrine both orthodoxy, and, it may be believed, a nucleus of piety. For all that, the violence of the great nobles of the region could scarcely be surpassed, and it was a violence which had first and foremost the sanction of rapacity. Their lust for gold was insatiable, their extortions incredible. Forgery of

territorial documents was continual; cheap purchase and dear selling of, for instance, grain, was habitual. No marriage could take place without the preliminary purchase of their consent; and no wonder that within its walls an unparalleled effrontery of vice displayed itself. The clergy, in despair, had practically abandoned the teaching of Christian doctrine; the Catholic religion, as writer after writer of that and slightly later periods repeats, was an affair of medieval tradition merely, a superstitious habit. Could such dry bones, then, live?

Regis was not first in the field of reform; and because we praise him, we thank God, too, for those many unknown preachers of His glory, or men whose names have remained for us but names, whose work has produced, however, eternal life in souls, and who teach us that, after all, the Saints are not so few. The stars most men know by name and recognize may not be many; and astronomers themselves have counted up but a low percentage of innumerable worlds. But even children may know that these are there, and be thrilled by the very knowledge that their imagination, even, plays them false. It may be that God's stars of more resplendent sanctity are not for that more powerful than those which human eyes may never even see.

Regis as usual went straight to the point. He appeared in pulpits and announced the facts of Christian doctrine. In a couple of years he found himself a sort of official catechist to the town. He became, for one reason or another, the fashion. He established himself firmly in the Benedictine church of Saint Pierre-le-Monastier, and four or five thousand people flocked regularly to hear him. They over-flooded all the standing room and climbed the tribunes, and, from the porch and cloister, strove to catch stray words, and rode astride on the very beams which upheld the vaults. Regis made not the least effort after pulpit eloquence or even what was thought good taste. When he wanted people to laugh, he made them laugh; when he was indignant he attacked them frankly; he used the language which alone, he thought, they were likely to understand. He had all sorts of dramatic methods of reinforcing his words, and wrote to himself letters from the dead, from souls saved or damned, and read them aloud from the pulpit. But, on the whole, what he made for was instruction. He asked questions, and insisted on their being answered; he dictated formulæ and résumés, and had them learnt by heart. In this way he became the best-known man in the city, and, naturally, was subjected

to the harshest criticisms of those refined apostles who would not condescend to such nerve-distressing crudities of method.

Perhaps among half-savage folks a display of physical strength makes the best first impression. We have more than once observed the readier welcome accorded to giant missioners, whose muscles have lent singular force to their arguments. Regis was not strong, but he had a violent temper, and his bringing up among farm-labourers had not diminished his knowledge of the contents of the French language. But grace made a sort of soul even for his moments of anger; he permanently converted a drunkard and wife-beater by a single harangue, delivered when he caught the man in a blind-alley of the town; one box on the ears brought a blasphemer, first to his marrow-bones, and then, so to say, to the knees of his heart. With one feat of St. Regis, all Le Puy was to re-echo. Two women were quarrelling, one using the most hideous blasphemies against God, and Christ, and Mary. Regis, out of himself, seized a handful of clay and stuffed it in her mouth. The poor man's frantic action was discussed in every key throughout the town, and created great anxiety at Rome when it was adduced against his canonization; it was decided that it was un-

usual; not destined, if imitated, to any customary success; and, best, just registered without further explanation. . . . Still, anyone who has observed how the least pious of men, the least careful in their language, may yet not unfrequently be stung to perfect frenzy by blasphemy, of which the very hint is torture to them, will not find this episode hard to understand.

Not that his methods were habitually thus vivacious. He had a good business head, and organized. The poorer quarters of Le Puy were in a pitiable condition. He arranged for a group of ladies, each with her special department well defined, to investigate and visit them regularly. District-visiting nowadays, though so necessary, has only a tolerably good name. Even the district visitor may feel that she has little enough right to pry into the dwelling, not to say the habits, of a resentful fellow man or woman. The complications due to modern levelling had not then been introduced; and the poor were genuinely grateful when into their reeking hovels these ladies made their way. Fr. Regis had a large room in the College which he called his "treasury"; it was full of the most extraordinary collection of objects which he proposed, sooner or later, to give away to the destitute. He found a

purpose in everything, and anticipated the splendid methods of a Fr. Bans in creating a use for the useless. Nor were these presents tossed to the poor, as it were, from the further bank of an unbridged chasm cleft by patronage. Regis took the gifts himself; put the old shawl with his own hands round shivering shoulders; patted the new pillow into softness behind the head whose aching was half cured, already, by his gentle touch; ate and drank himself from the broken food which might be all he had been able to bring, and which the pauper host, with true French and Catholic courtesy, was keen that he should share, and made thus of these repulsive meals a holiest of communions. Often into those hovels his companion could not force himself to enter, such was their reek. "Even to-day," a modern writer pleasantly declares, "certain streets in Le Puy are the tourist's joy, to so high a level of the picturesque does their dirt attain." In the time of Regis, most of the town was even more unclean. Entertainingly enough, St. Regis, asked once to show a visitor round the interesting antiquities and other monuments of the city, begged his permission first to look in, for a moment, at the home of one of his sick poor folk; his companion consented, nervous but polite; too stupefied, I gather, by the horror

of this first visit, to resist, he was induced by the zealous and rather absent-minded priest to make a second, and then a third. Gradually he grew to like it; the whole day was gladly spent in the fetid atmosphere of sick-rooms; and the visitor left Le Puy, not having seen the town, but amply content with what he had seen of Regis. . . .

Do not imagine that this Saint's charity was what we call "indiscriminate" and undisciplined. He led an extraordinarily modern campaign against those capitalists, for instance, who, foreseeing famine, tried to make a corner in grain, meaning to sell at inflated prices to the starving poor what they had collected at but little expense. Regis directed popular opinion so forcibly against them, and himself made such sound arrangements for the equitable selling of bread, that he practically crippled the designs of men who were for making fortunes out of their fellow-countrymen's dire necessity. Ourselves we have seen, on a large scale, the doings of men like these, for whom bayonets, our human instinct feels, would be too good. That was what, in a small way, Regis had to deal with, and he dealt successfully. He was a genius, too, for obtaining and organizing work for the workless; so that the gentlefolk, whom so often he found in terrible

distress, might win their necessary dole without feeling their self-respect impaired—and he, like St. Ignatius, had a quite special sympathy for the tragedy of that class—and that the idle alone should lack the bread which they did not choose to earn.

Above all, in this dissolute town, women betrayed already, or in danger, through poverty or inferior station, of man's brutal treachery, were chief among his cares. When the harvest brought the mountaineers down into the plains around the town, he arranged all manner of groups, safe domiciles, and friends for the country girls who trooped into the danger-zone, so to say, and were in as serious peril as those who to-day go, for example, to gather hops. He shrank from no sort of audacity in the saving of individuals; his ascendancy was so great that he could allow himself to enter houses of ill-name, private or public, and rescue girls detained there half or wholly against their will. For long, public opinion supported him in this, though again and again he was exposed to the personal attacks of the angered and defrauded lover. Ridicule at one time, at another personal assault; plot and ambush: he faced these readily. Sometimes he quelled his assailants by sheer gentleness, sometimes, when he judged fit not to turn the other

cheek, he blazed into such thunderstorms of indignation that his opponents slunk, cowed, from his presence. He had caused, with the magistrate's permission, a group of notorious courtesans to be enclosed in a certain house. Hearing that this place was to be attacked, one night, by a crowd of angered youths, he extorted a reluctant permission from his Superior, and went out at midnight to confront them, having first "made his will," and left directions in case he should be killed, which he fully expected to be. Single-handed, he dispersed the mob of rakes and saved God's prisoners.

It would be valuable to know the details of the Refuge which Regis established for these women. Unfortunately these are almost wholly lacking. Probably we should find them dull enough, and very likely too monastic and "uniform" for our modern taste. The important fact is, that Regis, again treading in the steps of St. Ignatius, began by gathering five or six penitents and having them safeguarded in the homes of pious and wide-minded ladies—in fact, the courage and breadth of generosity of these Good Shepherdesses can hardly be gauged by our own less meticulous propriety. Soon, however, this informal method crystallized, and a regular home with rules and established direction was created.

The Bishop and immediate Superiors were at first enthusiastic. Almost at once, however, the inevitable panic displayed itself. Regis was put on bounds. Even his visits to hospitals were curtailed: his zeal was strait-waistcoated; his moneys taken over; above all, access to the Refuge was peremptorily denied to him. Regis bowed to the storm and waited. Still, even Saints have the duty to confront the facts. Regis perceived that he was now useless in Le Puy. He prepared a request for his own removal. Elsewhere, he felt, he might be able to begin again, unknown, and perhaps on other lines. But the blow fell, not on him. The Rector, Fr. Ulmeau, found himself suddenly despatched to Béziers. His successor, Fr. Arnoux, reinstated Regis in all his old positions. He kept thereafter a firm hand upon the Refuge, and in the midst of its nerve-storms and inevitable crises displayed a steady head. He never was rough, never condescending, with these poor women, but spoke to them always, a contemporary says, "as though they were princesses."

Such, then, in its main outline was the life of Regis in Le Puy, of which what can we say save that in all its external part it was duplicated by many another labourer in Christ's vineyard, in France or beyond its borders, at

that time, and before or since? Intensified perhaps somewhat beyond the accustomed routine of town missionary life, it yet in all main points was normal and to be differentiated almost wholly by its soul. That soul was its innocency, and, better than snowy innocency, its white-hot love of God, and of those sick or wandering or faithful sheep for His sake. It was the soul of love which caused him to spend what time was left to him upon his knees, shortening his sleep to those three hours which were all that he found necessary, and eating a bread most men knew not of, that will of God which replaced so much, for him, of mere material food. With his mind in prayer, then, Regis went about his toil, and there is nothing left to say but the poor platitude that Regis did what other men did, not as they did it. Yet, for all that, his figure stands out black and gnarled and unmistakable, though haloed by a golden and tender light, in that volcanic city of the Velay.*

The incident of Regis's domestic difficulties, alluded to on p. 136, have served for corroboration to the legend, widespread and believed by many of his

* I may perhaps add that there is still a singular charm in his directness of action, to which I earlier alluded. If he wanted to get a mattress, say, to some sick person, he carried it there on his back.

confrères even nowadays, that Regis was expelled from the Society, and died, *felix opportunitate*, just before the papers of dismissal reached him. So popular is this tale that it is worth alluding to it. During the process of beatification, which was not concluded till 1716, a priest, Louis Maille, who had quarrelled with the Jesuits, suddenly assured the Promoter of the Faith that Regis had been expelled from the Society and died a parish priest in the Cevennes. The Pope was informed, and caused researches to be made. No evidence was forthcoming, and the beatification was proceeded with. In 1714, a letter was written begging the Vicar-General of Avignon to find out whether it was indeed true that Regis, "like the Blessed Stanislaus," had been expelled from the Society. If so, "you will, no doubt admire, along with me, the fact that a man, if he is to be canonized, must inevitably first leave the Society." On August 17, 1716, the Jansenist *Gazette de Hollande* asserts formally, and for the first time in print, that Regis was expelled by the Jesuits in consequence of his adhesion to "a purer form of doctrine," and died a curate in Provence. Daubenton was just able to include in his Life a refutation of this tale, uselessly, indeed, insisting on the word Provence, where he said Regis had never been—as a matter of fact, in the loose and common usage of that name, especially in the north, "the whole south-east of

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If he wanted a person to leave a certain house, he went and fetched her out. If he disapproved of the language of town-porters, and noticed a group of them in church while he was preaching, he broke his sermon off and told them what he thought of them. This, I need not say, brought down no little obloquy upon him.

France is commonly included "—but cited the death-certificate of Regis, where he is qualified as "a Jesuit of Le Puy," and the obituary notices immediately issued by the Rector of that house. In 1738, however, the Jansenist *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques* repeats with emphasis that Regis died out of the Society, alleging as proof that "everybody knew this"; that he had long lived outside the Jesuit houses; that a letter of the contemporary provincial had been "heard of," in which that Superior asserted that Regis had "long ago" been expelled. Unfortunately this document, dated ninety-eight years after the death of the Saint, is discredited by all the official Jesuit Catalogues of the Toulouse Province from 1636 to 1640, in which Regis is always marked as member of the Le Puy residence, while in 1641 his name figures there as the first of those members of the province who had died during that year. There was then no question of public or official dismissal. But perhaps, it is said, this dismissal was being privately asked for, and, indeed, on the verge of accomplishment? All that can be said to this is, that, by way of negative evidence, no trace of any such request, even in the period, when Regis was being criticized, is anywhere to be found. All the archives have been offered to exploration, and no such trace exists. On the other hand, letters are to be found in plenty, spread over the years 1637-1640, to within five months of the Saint's death, proving that his Provincials, Rectors, and other personages, were writing enthusiastically to Rome of his successes in the different departments of his activities, and the cordial approbation given by the General in answer to these is also extant. Immediately after his death the correspondence continues on similar lines.

The legend grew, then, from the following facts:

(i.) Regis, early in his stay at Le Puy, could not "get on," as we say, with his Rector. But the Rector left, not Regis. (ii.) Towards the end of his life he begged leave to devote himself to country missions, even if it kept him outside the Society's houses some months at a time. But this was recognized as work wholly suited to a Jesuit, and was approved by Rome itself. (iii.) No Jesuit was cited as witness in the collection of evidence for his beatification in 1702; one only, in 1676. This was, however, because the Archbishop of Vienne had deliberately preferred *not* to cite Jesuits, though they were willing to be called, as being parties presumably "interested" in the triumph of their colleague. Lay folk and secular clergy gave an even more striking witness than theirs would have been. Finally, the source of the story is clearly Jansenist, and was used by Jansenists as a weapon to discredit the Society at a moment when the *Unigenitus*, which gave them their *coup de grâce*, was in preparation.

III.

"Here, here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send!
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying."

R. Browning.

Early in the autumn of 1640, Regis recommenced his mountain missions, and penetrated further than before into the valley of the Rhone. He visited Veyrines, a village on the mountain of Chaix, and announced that he would return to La Louvesc,* a village on its other slope, to give a special Christmas mission. He appeared suddenly, however, at the country-house near Le Puy to which the priests of that house went for a periodical day's rest. Everyone was astonished to see him, but the conversation was brief. He announced that he proposed to make a three days' re-

* This name is to be pronounced *La Louvé.*

treat, and returned to the town after dark and by side-streets, that his arrival might pass unnoticed. During his retreat he made a general confession of all his life.

"When," asked the confessor, "do you propose to return to your missions?"

"To-morrow," answered Regis.

The ceremony of "Renewal of Vows" was not far distant: the priest begged him to wait till it was over. "The Master," said the Saint, "does not wish me to wait." The phrase was odd. The confessor assumed that by *The Master* Regis meant the Rector; and the Rector, he insisted, had assured him he would be charmed if only Regis would stay.

"No," he repeated. "The Master does not wish it, and I shall leave to-morrow. And," he added, "I shall not be back for the Renewal of Vows, but Brother Bideau will."

This lay-brother was the companion who, by rule, went everywhere with Regis.*

* Therefore in all the hardships which we have described, Regis had this, or some other, lay-brother at his side. Let us then once more pause for a moment to pay homage to these souls, now entered with St. Regis into the joy of their Lord; their names may, like Brother Bideau's, be just known, or may have altogether faded. Yet these men lived and worked and suffered; and we are again reminded of the innumerable privates in God's army, unnamed

It struck the confessor as strange that Regis should elect to stay at a distance alone, despite the rule. However, he made no comment.

Regis settled a few small debts, left a few directions, and started early next morning, three days before Christmas Day.

The weather was appalling; and on December 23 night fell while he was still on his road. He lost his way, went to the left instead of the right, and found himself in the dead of night once more at Veyrines, not La Louvesc. And a tragic incident occurred. In the village, where but a week before he had preached and endeared himself to all, no place was found for him. Did he go knocking, from door to closed door, unable to make himself heard, in that howling gale? Even on the windows thickly curtained with fleeces and hides, was his tapping inaudible? Were human hearts too hard, or too timorous, supposing he was heard, to open the doors and let the freezing night and eddying snow into huts hard to warm, together with an unknown traveller, perhaps a brigand? Or did Regis, eager to imitate,

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in any published roll of honour, yet to be recognized and hailed in heaven, where their voices join to make the hymn whose sound is "as the voice of many waters."

at that Christmas season, the night which Mary and Joseph once endured at Bethlehem, not even try to find a lodging? We prefer to fancy this. In the black village, all iron and granite against the furious storm, Regis and the brother stood, two living creatures, unheeded by winds and snows and houses. They crawled to a ruined barn, and there, snowed upon, howled round about by the long hours of hurricane, they spent the night.

Very early on Christmas Eve, his teeth chattering with the fever which had gripped him, but determined not to cheat La Louvesc of its promised Gospel, he pushed on across the mountain. Immense crowds awaited him. He went straight to the church, preached, heard confessions, said his Mass, and heard confessions again, preaching at intervals all that evening, and then all the night. Christmas Day was spent in like manner, and again on St. Stephen's Day he heard confessions till his Mass, which he said very late. After this he left the confessional, which was too thronged for privacy, and sat in the sanctuary by the Altar. A broken window above his head poured its icy stream of air on to his shoulders, and when evening came the agony of his pneumonia mastered him. He was carried to the presbytery, and put in an arm-chair near the

fire. Thither again the crowds pursued him. He heard twenty more confessions, and then fainted. He was put to bed and rose no more. He lay there for four days. A doctor came from Annonay and three Jesuit confrères. He went to confession, but spoke, else, hardly at all. He had the docility of the dying; he would have preferred milk, and the poor man's food, to the soup he was offered; he asked to be laid on straw, to die as Christ was born. Both of these humble requests were refused to him, and he submitted with serenity. The year ran out, and just before midnight on New Year's Eve, the last weariness passed through him, and he murmured that he felt ill. Then to the Brother, Bideau, he whispered: "Brother I see Our Lord and His Mother opening Heaven to me. . . ." Finally he spoke the prayer, *Into Thy hands I commend my spirit*, and so died.

Regis was buried where he died; and when the Jesuits wished to translate his body to Le Puy, the mountain-folk, jealous for their treasure, buried it deeper still and covered the coffin with a perfect roof of iron bars. So he was left in peace among these peasants whose habits he knew so well, whose patois he talked, and whose food he shared. To him, in his Basilica, solidly established more than 3,000

feet aloft amid the mountains to-day, the crowds converge. Round his relics, enshrined above the high-altar, a vast circular balustrade forms a Communion-rail, and fifty to sixty thousand pilgrims annually from all parts of France make crowns round Regis while they receive the Living Bread he died to bring them. In a hundred ways his influence has radiated through space and time. I will mention but one institution in the foundation of which his name is an essential element—the Society of the Cenacle; and two souls whom his influence went primarily to form—the marvellous missionary nun, Mother Duchesne of the Sacred Heart Society; and the Curé d'Ars himself, who only after a pilgrimage to La Louvesc succeeded in his efforts to become a priest, and throughout his life kept Regis for his model.

ST. PETER CLAVER

I.

"A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Isa. xxii. 2.

Peter Claver was born in 1581 in a farm on the south slope of the Pyrences, near Verdu. His parents were folks of good descent to whom fortune had played false, and though the child, who was regarded as born in answer to prayer, was dedicated from the outset to the Church, and would not, in consequence, have to earn his living, he spent his boyhood in no luxurious surroundings. The traditions, it may be, of his family, and the mystic destiny before him, accentuated in the growing lad that something of melancholy and severe which the Spanish race displays, and which even ran the risk of softening into a timidity and dreaminess which might have cheated his higher aspirations. His uncle, a Canon of Solsona,* offered to educate him privately; but his father, seeing

* A town some twenty miles west of Manresa.

that competition and free mingling with his fellows would expand his personality, sent him to a distance from his home, to the Jesuit College at Barcelona.

He did well at his studies, and received minor Orders. After a while, like most impressionable boys, it may be, he experienced a drawing towards the Order to which his spiritual guides belonged. He entered on a span of vacillation, not daring to mention his hope to anyone, since he felt his vocation so insecure that a snub or curt postponement might, he knew, extinguish it altogether. He ended, however, by applying for permission, and was accepted, to the distress of his parents, who had looked forward to their son's company as they grew old. They made the sacrifice generously, however; and he entered the Noviciate at Tarragona on August 7, 1602.

A pilgrimage made, literally in the footsteps of St. Ignatius, to Montserrat, may, if his biographers are not speculating, have stirred in him some natural desires for a more contemplative kind of life; be that as it may, he took his first vows as a Jesuit on August 8, 1604, and after a few months only, it would seem, of classical study he was sent for his philosophy to the Jesuit College of Montesione, at Palma in Majorca.

To meet the right man at the right time makes all the difference in some lives, as we have seen in the case of Ignatius and Xavier, Ignatius and Favre. At Montesione Claver met the man who fired him with the vision of unsuspected possibilities, and braced his not too tense fibres into fit energy for his enterprise. This was the lay-brother Alonso Rodriguez. He had inherited a respectable business, and lived a business man's life till he was forty, then, his wife and children being all dead, he entered the Jesuit Society in 1571. After some time he was appointed the gatekeeper at the College of Montesione, and held that post for over twenty years, being reduced, in his infirm old age, to assistant at the gate in 1604, not long before Claver's arrival. Alonso had achieved, during those years, an astonishing degree of sanctity—sanctity, however, of a type singularly baffling to those who measure the worth of human qualities by common sense alone, and regard a life commensurate with the visible scheme of things as an adequate expression of spiritual possibilities. Alonso, even to the "average religious man" of to-day, though not of his own day, is something of a stumbling-block; to the Greeks among us he is sheer foolishness. The incredible naiveness with which he translated his

theories of abnegation into act issue into anecdotes exasperating to all who cannot take these incidents in the concrete, as it were, incorporate with this man, this lay-brother, who made himself loved by all, and honoured, instinctively, not alone by all Majorca, but by many hundreds on the mainland, whither his fame had reached; men who, "in a veritable second childhood of religion," were wise to discern the hero. It may be that old men of this type—I will not say, the complete expression of the type, like Alonso—are not so seldom to be met with in the ranks of lay-brothers of religious Orders. Perhaps anyone who has lived in a larger house of some such Order—a house of studies, for example—will remember more than one of these gentle old men, full of profound spiritual insight expressing itself often in acts of the most pathetic childlikeness or downright childishness. And such encounters come, I would dare to say, with a sweetness singularly refreshing to a mind in danger of sophistication, for the moment, by too much metaphysic or jaded, at any rate, by intellectual drudgeries. *Non in dialectica*. . . . Let so much, then, be said in homage of Alonso, and in affectionate recollection of not a few of his brothers, still, or not long since, among us.

Peter Claver became an intimate friend of Alonso Rodriguez, and actually obtained permission from his Superiors to visit the old ex-porter for a quarter of an hour daily, during which time the two spoke of the spiritual life and the ideal a Jesuit should set before himself. In Alonso existed not only an unextinguished Spanish fire, but an extraordinary force of character and, after all, much accumulated experience which probably fitted him satisfactorily to judge men. He concluded without the slightest hesitation that the destiny before Claver was of the very highest; and, himself fired by the stories of the South American missions, kept urging upon the young man a career devoted entirely to the unbaptized races of that continent. It appalled him to think of idle priests, or even priests just decent at their regulated duties, while in his imagination he could see fields white, first, for harvest, and then mildewed, rotting and blackened for lack of one to preach. Thus he supplied the docile boy with a "directive idea," an imperative notion which should stimulate his efforts and co-ordinate them; and in this way the close schoolroom was transfigured with the light of a distant sky; and across the smell of ink and of old papers was brought to Claver all the perfume of the

Caribbean Sea. Throughout his studies in Majorca—and at these he did well; after conquering his preliminary nervousness, he acquitted himself with credit in a public "defence" of the theses he had studied—Claver kept the vision before his eyes. When he returned, his philosophy completed, to Barcelona, he immediately petitioned to be sent to the West Indies. The Provincial allowed him to shepherd his hopes; meanwhile he must keep at his theology. After two years, Claver passionately reiterated his appeal, and permission to depart was granted to him. Father Mexia was to lead a contingent of Spanish Jesuits to America; the province of Aragon gave him, on her part, Peter Claver. In America, Bishops were hard to come by. Mexia asked that Claver might be ordained before leaving home. A belated panic beset the young man. He begged for respite. To enter the Noviciate, to take his vows, to argue in public had successively scared him; now, the priesthood was a terror. Superiors yielded, and in April, 1610, Claver left Seville, a layman yet.

II.

"If to feel in the ink of the slough,
And the sink of the mire,
Veins of glory and fire
Run through and transpierce and transpire,
And a secret purpose of glory in every part,
And the answering glory of battle fill my heart;
To thrill with the joy of girded men,
To go on for ever and fail and go on again,
And be mauled to the earth and arise,
And contend for the shade of a word and a thing
not seen with the eyes,
With the half of a broken hope for a pillow at
night
That somehow the right is the right,
And the smooth shall bloom from the rough;
Lord, if *that* were enough?"

R. L. Stevenson.

I.

The town of Cartagena was founded by Pedro de Heredia in 1533, and its superb harbour instantly assured to it a future as a great commercial centre. Peter Claver arrived there, and there he expected forthwith to be established. So he might have been, had his ordination already taken place. As it was, he was sent to the distant College of Santa Fé

at Bogota for two more years' theology. Unluckily, he found, on arrival, that the College was so poor and understaffed that no theological courses could as yet be started; he saw himself made, practically, a lay-brother, and served by turn as sacristan, porter, infirmarian and cook. In fact, Peter, his dreams eclipsed by a new version of mystic abnegation, petitioned to be allowed to become, and to remain, a lay-brother in very fact. His prayer was refused; professors arrived; classes began. Peter laboured once more at learned books; the months went by, and nothing seemed to happen. At the end of his theology, he appears to have been sent, still unordained, to make his tertianship at the Noviciate of Tunja. Another year passed. Only in November, 1615, did he transfer himself to Cartagena, and not for another year was he made priest. I find no explanation of this dislocated career and ordination repeatedly postponed, especially as his theological examination is said to have been brilliant and to have fitted him for "profession." Are we, then, to surmise that scruples and timidity still paralyzed him, and that he could not bring himself to face the finality of that Consecration?

At Cartagena, however, he met once more the man he needed, in this case Fr. de San-

doval, whose work lay entirely among the negro slave population; and though until his ordination Claver could not obtain leave to work with him, but accompanied a certain Fr. Nunez on ordinary missionary work among Europeans, he ended by passing an entire year under this extraordinary man's formation, and even took his place while Sandoval went off on distant journeys into the still uncivilized "hinterland" of Cartagena. On his return he saw with satisfaction that he need trouble no more about a successor. On to Claver's shoulders his mantle had fallen, with a double portion of his spirit.

What Fr. de Sandoval had to cope with was the result of the slave trade.*

The slave trade began, to speak roughly, by the importation of African natives into Europe in the reign of Henry of Portugal, the "Navigator," who systematically explored the west coast of Africa in 1442. But the trade as-

* I have taken much information concerning the slaves and their condition from Miss M. Peter's Life of St. Peter Claver, *Æthiopum Servus*, and the authorities she mentions. Analogous facts, such as the management, by the Jesuits, of the native Indian, especially in their Paraguay "reductions," are to be found in Mr. Cunningham Graham's endlessly enjoyable book, *A Vanished Arcadia*. Mr. Koebel's *In Jesuit Land* is full, too, of entertaining and illuminative information.

sumed its colossal proportions and more horrible characteristics when, after 1500, African negroes began to be imported, in vast numbers, into the Spanish Colonies in America. It was imperative, then, to have labour in great quantities; and contracts or monopolies existed whereby individuals or groups were privileged and bound to supply a certain number of slaves annually, unembarrassed by competition. Not only then did the slaves serve their utilitarian purpose of supplying labour, but their very persons became a source of revenue to the monopolists, who bought cheap and sold dear. Genoa purchased the first contract in 1517; then came Germany. Portugal held all the contracts from 1595 to 1639, Claver's period. In 1713 England was granted her first contract, and became henceforward the chief holder.

Titles under which, it was held, slaves might lawfully be acquired were: Right of just war; condemnation for crime; self-sale; and birth of a slave-mother. The immediate result of this theory, much mishandled, was a reign of violence in the African territories which baffles the imagination. Who, in Europe, could guess whether the "wars" to which traders appealed, were "just," or not? As a matter of fact, the native kings, tempted by European gold, set

raid after raid on foot, war after war, followed by the "great pillage," as it was called; they would sell whole villages at a time to the white traders or their native agents. Actually, when war failed as a suitable device, they encouraged crime, even in their own families, as an excuse for handing over black bodies to commerce. The slaves, victims at the outset of bloodshed and rape, were then packed into slave ships, of which, in Sandoval's time, some twelve or fourteen entered the port yearly, each with 300 to 600 slaves on board. By Claver's time the numbers had enormously increased, and there was always a huge secret trading which eluded the contracts of monopoly. Slaves were packed in bundles of six, their necks being chained together, and their feet shackled, each man's to his neighbour's. They were "wedged," Sandoval writes, "under a deck, where neither sun nor moon could penetrate, and a Spaniard would not dare put his head to the hatchway for fear of fainting, nor could he remain within for a single hour without grave risk, such is the stench, narrowness, and misery of their shelter." A little uncooked maize and some water was all they received, every twenty-four hours, "unless, indeed," he adds, "we reckon countless blows, lashes, and cruel words." The passage lasted some two

months; about one-third died on board; once, of a cargo of 500, 120 died in one night. In a certain contract, "the French Royal Guinea Company is bound to pay duty on negroes who die after landing"—a clear incitement to traders to despatch the gravely sick before disembarkation. Reduced literally to skin and bones; covered, as often as not, with sores, and half or wholly crazed, they were herded, on landing, into a vast yard, where they collapsed, "one huge mass of putrid life and suffering." A crowd of curious spectators stood "afar off." Even priests could scarcely force themselves to approach them. The heroic Sandoval himself, the annual letters of the Jesuit province of New Granada for 1638–1643 relate, "when he received notice of the arrival of a negro vessel, was covered instantly with a cold and death-like sweat at the recollection of what he had endured on the last occasion; nor did the experience and practice of years ever accustom him to it." Men and women died in the yards, and lay there naked and rotting, for none would touch them to bury them. A special form of home-sickness beset the wretched survivors, in whom a certain moral sensitiveness was even more noticeable than their fear of physical pain, and they would eat all manner of dirt to hasten their end.

The astounding fact is that despite the appalling loss and deterioration of their stock-in-trade, merchants still found the business sufficiently lucrative to continue it on these lines.

It would be entirely out of place here to relate the history of the Church's attitude towards slavery, in theory or in practice, or of the long fight kept up against its scandals by Popes, theologians, and, in America especially, by Dominicans and Jesuits more, perhaps, than others. This is an account of a man, and men usually have to cope with ready-made situations. There is little to show that Claver speculated or argued about the ethics of slavery in the abstract, though Fr. de Sandoval, for instance, did so, and wrote a book based on observation and inquiry and experience of which the value can scarcely be set too high. A distinction, then, must be drawn between the duties of theologians and of men actively engaged in dealing with concrete facts, just as the slave trade and its methods must not be confused with the acquisition and holding of slaves and their treatment, when once acquired. This always is to be remembered, that when the slaves found themselves in their new environment, they perceived that their new world was based, at any rate, upon Christian

principles, ill-carried out, it may be, but existing and recognized. Thus, that slaves had souls, no one doubted. As humans, they were their masters' equals, and as Christians very likely their superiors. Thus the right to marriage was indubitably theirs, a right unrecognized in the English Colony of Jamaica till 1826, and then yielded but grudgingly, no minister being suffered to marry two natives without *written permission* from the slaves' owner. Indeed, Spanish law early in the sixteenth century was whole generations ahead of English law in the late eighteenth; and the English slave-owners of Jamaica who "talked lightly of their seraglios of 'black cattle,' and asked whether an ourang-outang husband was not a worthy partner for a Hottentot woman," had no serious parallels in a colony where the background of thought was Catholic.

So much I have felt it necessary to say, that it might be understood by what manner of problem Peter Claver found himself confronted. I will say once and for all that by no philosophical speculation or political agitation did he strive to solve it, but by direct application of personal Christian charity to the unfortunate men in whose persons the problem was incarnated. Others might work for a general reconstruction of society, in some

future when all these men and women and little children had lived their miserable lives and died; meanwhile, there were those men and women and children, living and dying, and they asked him not to dream, but to do.

II.

The Lives of St. Peter Claver recount his dealings with the negroes by means of a torrent of anecdotes which it would be tedious and indeed impossible to reproduce. On the whole, what he did seems to be almost less important than the fact that he did it for almost thirty-eight years, with absolute self-surrender, in dealing with a material, so to say, such as I have tried to indicate. Perhaps, then, it will be enough though there be offered here no more than the outlines of his activity. Imagination is quite unlikely to equal, and certainly will never exaggerate, the vividness, indeed the crudity, of the colours with which the picture might justly be filled in.

The moment a slave ship was sighted off Cartagena, Claver was informed. He had a system of messengers for this. Armed with biscuits, lemons, jam, and—he would not have apologized—tobacco and brandy, he hurried to the harbour. With him went interpreters,

formed by him, in great numbers, to cope with the very varied dialects of the slaves. But he needed little interpretation. These negroes were like children, and even when quite themselves—and, as I said, they mostly arrived half crazed, and not in fit state for exhortation or even talk—understood action and gesture, expression of face and tone of voice, better than any words. These frantic creatures, convinced that now at last the threats of their gaolers would be fulfilled, that their blood should serve for the dyeing of the ship's sails, their fat to caulk its sides, recognized instantly, in Claver, the spirit which had brought him. He followed them to their yards, washed them, made beds for them, cooked for them, fed them, mothered them—for there is no other word. Realize that these human creatures were, by now, capable of no effort, however elementary, of self-help; they had in them no more instinct, even, towards nourishment, cleanliness, or self-control. Men are at times able just to lie down and gradually stop living. Without Claver, negroes, by the thousand, during those nearly forty years, would just have allowed themselves to die.

Claver, of course, aimed at converting souls —and by conversion Catholics do not mean the violent attack on a man's mental habits with

which unbelievers seem to credit missionaries. It is easy to argue that a man's thoughts are best left alone; that it is labour wasted to uproot his mind from the spiritual soil it was accustomed to, and to transplant it into an alien territory where it is almost bound to deteriorate. Conversion is development, expansion, invigoration, and more even than that. It is a change in the whole way of being of a soul, and its uplifting in the whole scale of creation. This, in the ultimate resort, is the work of God, giver of grace, and no one man can really convert another.

But he can turn the soul's eye, as Plato said, towards the light, the more so as the True Light shines even in the darkness, and the darkness has never quenched it. God wants the half-dead soul to be re-born, or born into the "more abundant" life. So Claver at once instituted his "Catechism" classes. Needless to say, he did his work not least by pictures—naïve images of negroes glorious in Heaven or hideous in Hell; negroes prostrate at the foot of the Cross; negroes at the side of Christ in each episode of His saving life; negroes mothered by Mary; negroes at the sacraments. The action of grace is recognizable. Claver knew quite well when to baptize and when to wait. He understood,

far better than any modern critic who dispenses with experience, the elusiveness of genuine "conversion;" he knew the fluidity of his negroes' minds, their stupidity, their frivolity, their probable relapses. He could discount their wild glee, their prancings and clappings of hands, their very embraces, the whole hubbub with which they greeted his gay or gruesome pictures, and his explanations haltingly interpreted. At least their faith was linked, to start with, with their love for him; he could not appear in the streets, still less in the yards, without being mobbed by negroes, clinging to his hands and cloak.

Not that Claver was weak with his neophytes. He undertook the hardest of all tasks, to brace these unstable natures into self-mastery. He would seek even to break or form habits by an initial *terrorizing*. The negroes slid from time to time into debaucheries of voluptuous song and dance and their disastrous sequels, or wild orgies of drunkenness, in which they blasphemed all the better for what Claver had taught them. Armed with "a scourge of small cords" and a crucifix, he appeared, in thunder and lightning, on the scene. It became easy for him to quell even a whole crowd "run amok," and restore order in a riot. Next day, the negroes would

be back at Confession in the church. It is true that the righteous paid no slight toll for these prodigals. The reek of a negro is said to be, for a European, an absolute thing, not dependent, for instance, on filthy overcrowding in a "yard." (Here I will say, once and for all, that you must never forget how each of Claver's visits to these places, and even to negroes' huts, involved his confronting a stench which, time and time again, sent his companion, when he could persuade one to come with him, to fly precipitately to the air, overcome with nausea, and unable even to persuade himself to return a second time. Yet thither Claver went, every day, and stayed, often and often, all day.) Anyhow, complaints grew noisy. Ladies especially said that they could not come to a church where negroes had attended Claver's daybreak Mass. And how, they asked, could they ever confess to Claver in a confessional blacks had used? Claver's answer was simple: "Go to someone else," he said, and pointed out the extreme inconvenience of the incriminated confessional; its exposure to the midday sun; its awkward shape; "Your dresses," he insisted, "will be spoilt —they can't fit into it." They were obstinate. Penitents often like being bullied. They were resolved to confess to Claver. The Saint was

no less obstinate. By means of pictures, often changed; of comfortable kneelers, often washed —the Saint drew even greater crowds of negresses to his confessional. He was there, in Lent, not rarely, *from three or four in the morning till noon*. At two o'clock he preached a short instruction on the Gospel of the day; heard confessions again till six, and then took the men out into the College courtyard, where he heard their confessions, in their turn, under a shed. Having tested himself and his results in this way for some six years, he took his final vows at the close of 1622, invoking Jesus, Mary, Peter, and Alonso Rodriguez, and adding a vow to consecrate himself to the service of the negroes "for ever." "Peter," he signed the paper, "slave of the negroes for ever."

And here it is worth noticing in Claver his heroism of perseverance. Do not imagine that his was but a history of trivial triumphs. He had to wait for years, often enough, before he melted, or strengthened, the heart of this one or that sufficiently to make his ministry of profit. And perseverance even with a dull success is meritorious! Not entertaining were the visits which, for fourteen years, he regularly paid to a sick old negro, unable to shift for himself, and certainly prolific of no active gratitude. Besides, although a certain nucleus

of his Christians remained fixed at Cartagena, most of this vast population of slaves was of course a floating one, and had changed completely in the course of a few months. This in itself was a terrific temptation, at certain moments, to give up. It was a case of always beginning again. Always he had to go back to the stale start of things; and after rowing, as it were, a few strokes forward, he must needs find that the stream had swept him back to his starting-place. Faces passed and passed before him till his life must have felt, at times, a mere shadow-pantomime; or a King's procession through noisy indeterminate crowds, where men and women are but endlessly repeated units, each indeed with eyes and thought fixed on his well-defined and unique personality, but each too like the other to reach, with real stimulus, his jaded brain. Poor Kings and Queens, having to bow and smile with ever renewed vivacity through those miles of crowded streets! What a play-acting, most of the way! But what must that have been in Claver's soul, which, during forty years, prevented his work ever losing its vitality, or ever becoming an insincere pretence?

Beneath, then, the sensational surface lay the duty of grey drudgery. But even the

fascination of horrors will pall. Claver never quite ceased to have to fight down the physical repugnance he felt for what he conceived to be his duty. Indeed, he fought it violently. This was the reason which sent him, time and time again, to suck the venom from wounds and ulcers which had set his senses in revolt. But as a rule he gave himself, in the day-time, but little time to think. No doubt to fear infection is to court it. Still, to disregard its possibility is not an infallible prophylactic, and we do not hear what his colleagues thought of Claver when he serenely boarded ships where half the cargo was dead of smallpox, or quite habitually used his cloak as pall for corpse of the leper or the scrofulous. As a matter of fact, his cloak grew legendary. Again and again its unexpected touch healed the sick in body or in soul. It served, rolled up, as pillow for a dying woman; spread out, as awning for a slave; as veil for lupus-ravaged faces and covering for the dead; disease fled from its contact, and death itself was conquered. May it be ours, since time and space matter nothing now for Claver, to hold in some sense if it be but the extremest hem of its threadbare folds. . . . Like St. Peter, his patron, he imparted virtue to what he touched, and "cloths and handkerchiefs" were carried from

his body to the sick. Later, the whole district will go mad after these relics of a Saint still living; the edge of his cassock will grow ragged with the tearing off of shreds; the signatures will be excised from certificates he signs; the very hair that is cut from his head; the very towels which, when the doctors have been at him, his blood has stained, are fought for by the princes of the people.

Claver concentrated his sick visits, when possible, at two hospitals. St. Sebastian's was always full of general cases; St. Lazarus was confined to lepers. It was the latter which became his favourite, because its patients were so much more horrible, in general esteem, than those of St. Sebastian. Claver did not by any means rely on miracles to cope with the misery of these lonely creatures. He arranged a regular store of lint, bandages, and ointments; he collected stuff for mosquito curtains, a negress stitched it into shape, and he nailed them up himself. In that age when bleeding was a regular part of doctoring he noticed that no surgeon would consent to use his lancets when the patient was a leper, or even to touch him. The wretched men were reduced to lancing one another as best they might. Claver collected lancets, and helped the sufferers through the fateful operation.

To this hospital, too, he would bring troupes of scared musicians, who would give little concerts, eyes sedulously turned from the audience for whom they were providing this unequalled treat. And it was in this hospital that Claver made his mantle into a pall for an old leper who had lost his arms, and lay all alone in a garret to which the Saint, old by then and very weak, had to climb by a ladder.

The hospitals, which I have mentioned rather out of place, contained, alas! a population all too permanent. The negroes, I have said, were a folk constantly renewed. Claver did his best to keep in touch with his converts. I think he felt real affections, and quickly; and this, then, must be added to the personal pains incident to his apostolate, that he must be constantly saying good-bye. This is no slight thing. It must be keen suffering for a man who has grown, however rapidly, to love a fellow-human, to have to see him pass swiftly out of his visible neighbourhood into some uncharted part of life, in which what changes, what new interests, what consequent all but inevitable forgetfulness, are ever destined to come to him! Especially to the young, even when not too superficial, still more to the naturally shallow, frivolous, and tempera-

mentally unstable, like these natives, forgetfulness is so natural an event that it can scarcely be reproached to them. The wonder is, in this impermanent world, how tenacious are the affections which the young, or the simple, do afford; and how lasting and profound the gratitude with which they repay services to those who have felt it a privilege, on their side, to render them! Claver's heart was sensitive and strong, and felt keenly at once the joy of meeting gratitude, and the regret which separation, spiritual especially, made inevitable. Meanwhile, when slaves were sold away, he redoubled his care for them: he saw them on board, he waited till the ship was out of sight and hearing; he followed up his friends with letters, introductions, above all with prayers. As for slaves whose masters lived anywhere within a fairly wide radius from Cartagena, he visited them regularly, on a kind of missionary tour, confirming the good work he had begun for them. Accompanied by interpreters,* he went from village to village,

* It is interesting to know that he had to buy these interpreters outright. Naturally the slave-owners would not put their slaves at his disposal, permanently, for nothing. As it was, there was a great deal of grumbling, almost amounting at times to persecution, because of the quantity of time absorbed by Claver's catechisms.

planted a huge cross in the market-place, and then awaited the sunset return of the negroes from the fields. Frantic scenes of exultation attended their reunion, and the masters were not reluctant, on the whole, to allow their slaves time to attend the mission he might preach, so marked was the improvement, after it, in their work. In fact, such was the ascendancy which he gained over them, that he once, by a mere messenger, checked the panic of a whole population, which was in the act of flying from a volcanic eruption not far distant. He told them to wait where they were for him; and the next day led them all in procession round the still active crater, and there planted a cross. The eruption ceased; but the psychological miracle was almost as amazing. Who could have foreseen that a crowd of negroes, creatures quivering like aspen-leaves to every breath of panic, could have been braced, by the message of a man not present, first to hold their ground, and later on to march with him to the very razor-edge of danger as uncanny as it was real and violent ?

III.

Though Claver felt his work to be essentially among the negroes, he never confined his energies wholly to them, and, indeed, there appear to have been intervals between the departure of old gangs and the arrival of new cargoes, when Cartagena held relatively few of them. In one of these Claver was made minister of the College, and an amount of domestic work, often considered sufficient for one man's time and strength, was laid upon him. Indeed, his tendency appears to have been to do the work of each and all of his subordinates, a very bad plan in itself, quite apart from the probability of its killing him. He was soon exempted from his post of minister, only, however, to receive a new and even less appropriate one. Cartagena was full of social derelicts, men who had come out, as to some South Africa or Australia or Alaska nowadays, to make their fortune, and had failed. Having missed their chances in this world, these singular personages turned their attention to the next, and began to demand, in great numbers, to enter Religious Orders, an example not noticeably followed in the Klondyke or at Bloemfontein. It could not, however, be claimed that their previous education or experience was pecu-

liarly appropriate to candidates for the priesthood; and these aspirants were usually destined, by the Society of Jesus in New Granada, to become lay-brothers. A separate Noviciate was opened in Cartagena, and of this Claver was put in charge. Desperate adventurers are not, it may be, more hard to make Saints of than are negro slaves. Anyhow, Claver tried; he alternately waited on his novices with bewildering humility, and exacted of them tasks, in negro-yard or lazaretto, of an even more disconcerting abnegation. How long the novices remained we are not told; Claver certainly was relieved, after no too long period, of his duties, and the world drew breath again.

No one will suggest that a missionary's experiences in Cartagena were homogeneous. The port was fairly international. The coast-guard staff was, it appears, almost uniformly Turk, and therefore Mohammedan. Mohammedan convicts, too, appear to have been fairly numerous. The psychic qualities of Turk and negro differ as do those of granite and of quicksand. Yet Claver did his best for these folk too, but was the first to recognize that success was slow and rare. There remained the heretic. Heresy Claver encountered in the person of English and Dutch prisoners of war. These

were especially numerous after the recapture of the islands of St. Christopher and St. Catherine by Don Frederick of Toledo. Claver, invited to visit the fleet, which rode at anchor off the town, went there to carry the consolations of religion to the Catholic crews long deprived of Mass. Mass, indeed, was said on the flag-ship, and 600 English prisoners were ordered to assist. After it, the Spanish officers gave a dinner to which not only Claver, but the English officers were invited. Claver made himself, it appears, so pleasant, that the English asked permission to introduce to him their "prelate," no less a person (say the biographies) than the Archdeacon of London. Claver professed himself charmed. "He will want," pursued the prisoners, "to drink your Reverence's health; and he would expect you to reply. How about that?" Claver declared he would drink even to an Archdeacon. That prelate then came, bearded, dignified, and withal courteous and well-disposed. Then toasts were drunk. The officers went about their business; Peter and the Archdeacon remained in Latin discourse till the evening. What experience proves not too incredible, actually occurred. The clergyman owned that poverty, consequent on any abandonment of his charge, and the existence of a wife and family, alone

stood between him and the declaration of a conviction that had long been in formation. He would die, however, he insisted, Catholic. Claver rose from argument to exhortation. The old man wept, and would say nothing but "Pray for me, Father. Pray earnestly." Claver promised. Time went by. One day, on his visit to St. Sebastian's, Claver encountered a closed litter. "Who," he asked, "is that?" It was the Archdeacon, sick to death, but sound enough in soul to keep his promise. He died a Catholic.

Catholic, too, died a high percentage of the prisoners of war, struck down by some too inevitable epidemic, and so extraordinary was the impression made by the devotion of the priests who nursed them, that even those who had not sickened concluded, almost to a man, that the religion of the Spaniards was "the real thing," and turned Papist. Why relegate this story to any realm of myth? Again and again, during the present war, that argument has been rehearsed, and the conversions re-enacted. The passage from experience that a man's life is holy, to conviction that his creed is true, may not recommend itself to the all too logical. But it is at least a preparation of intellect and will to mark how a peculiar holiness of life flows directly

from a peculiar creed held with peculiar intensity; and there is a direct transaction possible between human spirits, in consequence of which it becomes safe for the one boldly to take its chances with the other.

Other prisoners than those of war preoccupied St. Peter Claver. Prisons were full, at Cartagena, a wild town of brawling and duelling and general miscarriages of justice. Claver was constant in the fetid cells, and on the scaffold less terrible than they. We keep discerning hints, less than half intended, it may be, of Claver's human side. He would take brandy with him to the gallows-foot, and, at moments when a criminal's courage failed him, succoured him not with religious discourse only. He wiped the man's wet forehead: he made him drink; he upheld him while the rope was being fitted, none too expeditiously, round his neck. Once the rope broke. Claver caught the wretched writhing man in his arms. Relentless authority sent forthwith for a new rope. This in its turn broke. Claver still was there. A Pharisee, who stood hard by, cried out to Claver that he was now "irregular," and deprived of his priestly rights, for that the cord of execution had, in falling, touched him. "What of it?" cried the Saint, "provided I am saving

a soul?" Only after this spontaneous outcry he perceived that this religious man was certainly talking nonsense, and told him so, not gently. At last the poor victim died in peace, and in his prayer-book were found words he had written there after Claver's visit to him in his cell. "This book still belongs to the happiest man in the world." They were few who died, when Claver was there by them, otherwise than happy.

Like a fantastic pageant, then, life at Cartagena flamboyantly went by, in crude stripes of absurdity, splendour, squalor, heroism, tragedy, cynicism, and sublimity. In every part of it Claver was to be seen, a Don Quixote of God, tilting obviously at windmills, and slaying giants unawares. In soldiers' tents, in workshops, in warehouses, in the most gilded of drawing-rooms and in the galleys; everywhere received, everywhere detached; a Jonah welcomed by a Nineveh enthusiastic if none too utterly converted. Yet not wholly unconverted either. For towns are not, even by Saints, as a rule, to be converted *en bloc*. Through the sweltering Caribbean city passed the cool stream and creative breeze of Claver's influence, healing the people without cease. Miracles and sweet symbols of his power blossomed about his feet. One day a servant

threw the water he had used for a baptism into a pan where a few dried stalks and dead leaves were lying. After a space she returned, and lo, the life-giving drops had worked their appropriate wonder, and the withered plant had grown green once more and even bursting into flower. . . .

III.

"Here the flame that was ash . . .
I have tended and loved, year upon year, I in the solitude
Waiting, quiet and glad-eyed in the dark, knowing that once a gleam
Glowed and went thro' the wood. Still I abode, strong in a golden dream.
. . . Unrecaptured.
For I, I that had faith, knew that a face would glance
One day, white in the dim woods, and a voice call, and a radiance
Fill the grove, and the fire suddenly leap . . . and, in the heart of it,
End of labouring. You! Therefore I kept ready the altar, lit
The flame, burning apart."

RUPERT BROOKE.

IN these labours thirty-six years went by, and in 1650 Claver was an old and very broken man. In that year the terrible news arrived that the plague, which had already ravaged Havana, Porto Rico, and Vera Cruz, was on its way towards Cartagena. Claver had been preaching a mission in that town by way of preparation for the Jubilee then to be cele-

brated, and had proceeded to make a missionary tour throughout the district of Terra Firma. Everywhere he found the plague raging; torrential rains were falling, broken by steaming hours of violent heat. Exhausted by his march, over roads which were no roads, from one scene of incredible exertion to another, Claver was recalled to Cartagena. An epidemic was there too; in a few days Claver took the infection. The Jesuits were already decimated. The young and robust seemed to collapse the first; this tired old man of seventy recovered. But in his recovery lay his acutest trial. So violent a shaking of his limbs remained as the plague's legacy to him, that Claver, whose whole life had lain in helping others, himself, now, all day long, stood in need of the minutest help. He could be carried down to the church each day, and there went to Communion among the negroes; and he could still hear a few confessions, though he fainted more than once in the confessional. Sometimes, on special occasions, he had himself taken to harbour, hospital, or lazar-house.* But the old man grew steadily

* When he made this last visit, no litter or carriage, it appears, was available. The Lazaretto sent its own old horse, which went its rounds collecting alms, to fetch him. The old man was hoisted

weaker, and was soon confined almost entirely to his room. And an extraordinary solitude formed itself around him. Was any man to blame? It is difficult to judge. The College staff, seriously depleted by the plague, had to do double duty, and was kept all day long at over-work, and at night returned exhausted and fit only to collapse into brief sleep. Then, what is everybody's duty is no one's. Presumably the Minister thought the Rector visited Fr. Claver, and the Rector thought the same about the Minister. Anyhow, they knew he had a negro servant to wait especially upon him, and presumed that this man would tell them—for assuredly they knew that Claver

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on to it, and *strapped firmly into his place.* The scene of perhaps inevitable tragi-comedy took place. The scared horse suddenly became restive; it broke from the restraint of the naturally incompetent person whom the lazar-house had sent to guide it; it galloped madly off, Claver's flapping cloak scaring it momentarily more and more, not to mention the shouts of the insane crowd who on these occasions always make bad worse. At last it stopped of its own accord. The old man was tenderly dismounted. But sympathy was not needed. His indomitable courage had not for an instant left him; he was more serene than when he started. Others said, and we well believe it, that he was so absorbed in God that he had not even noticed his danger, nor for one moment been shaken out of prayer.

would never ask—if anything were needed. But what if this business of visiting a sick old man had been realized for what it was—a duty of charity? Well, there appeared to be a conflict of charities. The sick and the outside work called the Fathers early forth, and it was very late when they returned, and perhaps they felt that Claver himself would have been shocked at the idea of their neglecting the plain work of the Gospel for his sake. Also a curious shyness grows up between a Community and an inmate of their house whom they never see. In the four years of life which remained to Peter Claver he became a stranger in his own home. No one any more went to see him. He liked to be left alone, men told each other; and little by little he grew to be quite forgotten.

Is not this, then, the chance for the touching romance of the simple-hearted native servant, alone left to his European master, faithful and gentle to the end? Alas! baptism does not necessarily civilize. And again and again, among those whom tradition and environment and creed should have humanized, we have seen a defective character accentuate itself precisely in its defects, especially when it knows its behaviour to be unwarrantable, and deserves, but does not receive, rebuke. There

are few things so exasperating as to have a man patient at one's expense; silence may be the worst of snubs; and holiness, when it does not convert, may very easily drive the perverse into active evil. The unfortunate Joaquin must not be supposed, from this, to have been a scoundrel. Rough, uncouth, stupid and impatient, he chafed at being tied thus hand and foot to the service of a weak old invalid who never talked and who could do nothing for himself. A veritable martyrdom was, undoubtedly, the consequence. Claver ate little: Joaquin, in consequence, filched from the dishes he carried up from the kitchen whatever pleased his fancy—none too carefully catered for, one may imagine, as a rule. Relics of food are always a disgusting spectacle. Moreover, the look of a dish accounts for about half its digestibility. Contemplate, then, Claver, unable to put food into his own mouth with his wavering hands, being fed on scraps by this negro, who never washed his own. On other days Joaquin neglected to clear away; dirtied plates remained around the bed, making the room reek in the scorching heat, and buzzed about by a cloud of flies. And the days were not unknown when the negro never came at all. Claver went foodless and unattended on those days, and, since he always tried to get

up to find his way at least as far as a tribune whence he could hear Mass, suffered severely; he had the greatest difficulty in dressing, and often fell heavily. His room was just above the sacristy, and sometimes the sacristan, who happened to be there, would come running up to see what the matter was. Claver excused himself gently, and never blamed the absentee. In fact, he begged to be left to the negro's services, for, he would repeat, he was *accustomed to him*. Yet even when the negro did come, he reached an extraordinary brutality of roughness, pushing about and hustling this annoying old man who could not even dress himself.

In this great solitude one companion did indeed reach him — nothing less than the biography of Alonso Rodriguez, whose picture he had always kept upon his wall, and whose few sheets of pious manuscript he had carefully preserved and now, in his old age, kept fingering and re-reading. Thus, over the two extremities of Claver's consecrated life, the spirit of the old lay-brother watched. Long ago, at Majorca, he had foretold Claver's apostolate. Now, at the very end, all apostolate finished with and behind him, the old man felt himself a boy again, listening as of old to his best counsellor, and life must have

seemed to him to be, after all, but a very little space.

Claver was well prepared to suffer, love, and use his solitude. Even as a young man he had had to learn to wait. Is it harder, to sit still doing nothing, when you are burning to begin, than, having begun and continued, and got the need of work into your blood and nerves, to have, once more, to sit down and do nothing? Is it the more cruel, to watch yourself *not* doing what you feel you might do, and, in the rapid ageing due directly to this nervous craving never satisfied, to watch the elasticity, the electricity, vanish from your powers, till the very wish to use or even have them has vanished with their dwindling—is this the harder, or to chafe in helplessness, feeding the imagination with shreds and husks of memory? Let them decide who may. But the Saints do not live by nerves. Historically, it may well be doubted whether in Claver's time and race much in the line of nerves existed. The European physique and temperament were still tolerably sound; neither Teuton, Celt, or Latin then was doomed to that "remnant flesh" which, from so many causes, heredity makes ours, and their spirit still knew itself immortal. Especially, as I said, the Saints, neither then nor now, live by

nerves alone. Not feverish is their energy; not drugged is their inaction; not unfocussed are they, unconcentrated, a-twitter with petty panics; not thrilled by fifth-rate fancies are their wits; their brains have no maggots in them. Substantial, massive, and potent were Claver's years of hiddenness and preparation; no pool of stagnant melancholy was this solitary harbour of his age. Our Lady lived one life; Peter and Paul a very different one: Alonso Rodriquez had taught St. Peter Claver how to keep close, throughout his years, alike to the Virgin Mother and to the Chief of the Apostles.

Moreover, throughout the whole of Peter's life there had been a solitude. The Rector of the house at Cartagena often came to Confession to him quite late, after the hour for retiring had struck. He would find Peter at his prayers or penances; and though so docile, as a rule, so unable, one would have thought, to complain or protest, the Saint at last implored the Rector either to come earlier or to find another confessor. "At least," pleaded the man whose whole day was one whirl, you would have thought, of self-chosen activities, "at least leave me the night."

In singular abstraction from all that did not directly concern that work had Claver lived.

To the end he was ignorant of the value of certain coins in circulation at Cartagena. Indeed, you might have thought that he allowed his prayer to be so deep and constant as to invade moments when alert attention was demanded as a duty. Thus, more than once, in the streets he was in grave danger from runaway horses which he, praying in his mind as he walked, had never noticed. Once, a violent thunderstorm, such as Cartagena knew too well, put the whole house in consternation, save Claver, still unaware of it, for he was praying. This man who hastened at full speed to the harbour when a slave ship was reported in the offing, never once went to witness the advent of some merely mercantile or military squadron, though this pageant drew the whole town regularly to the quays, and set bells pealing and cannon thundering, and tapestried every balcony with gold and crimson. To such purely personal curiosity or excitement he never would attend.

Besides, the severity of Claver's penances prove the existence in him of a separate and interior life from which they issued and which they intensified. It would be wholly impossible to maintain, for so many years, so regular and merciless a self-chastisement without some quite extraordinary interior momentum dic-

tating so purely personal a behaviour. After a certain point of severity in suffering has been reached, it is impossible for mind or body to find itself grown *used* to pain, as to some lesser —though considerable—amount even of self-inflicted pain it quite well can become accustomed, so as scarcely to notice it. Of all the profound considerations which go to explain Claver's appalling penances, so shocking to the nerves and principles of the merely "natural" man, I would here select this one alone: they witness to so terrific a current of personal thought and will, that its mere existence sufficed to set him *alone* utterly; even the thinnest thread of personality isolates a soul irretrievably; no one human soul can ever come utterly into the presence of another; all communication is through a whole series of vehicles, of *media;* all seemingly sure knowledge is precarious interpretation. But when the individuality, like Claver's, is titanic in its proportions, the isolation is necessarily all but complete, save for communion with and through Him who by law of His existence so inhabits all things that He is nearer to His own Creation than it is to itself.

In an account of St. Peter Claver it would be as misleading to avoid this reference to his penances, as it would be unnecessary. in what

is not a biography, to give their details. They are common to his career and to many another's; therefore in a "selective" study, they need not any more be dwelt upon. I would, however, briefly add that they sprang from no lack of normal sensitiveness: the negroes' reek, for instance. which in his own case he disregarded, he quite well perceived; and he strove, when others accompanied him, to quell it by every possible use of fumigation and spraying of scented waters; his power of neglecting, when it just inconvenienced him, sheer filth, did not mean he failed to see it; when, for instance, the Blessed Sacrament was to be carried to yard or lazar-house, what he could not clean, he covered with silken draperies he carried about for that purpose. And just as his austerity never made him harsh to his companions or colleagues, so neither did his affection and his pity for the negroes make him soft. A freed negress, who served him for interpreter, was herself once overcome, and fled from the ship in which Claver was attending to a cargo of plague-stricken slaves. He rushed after her to the deck. "Magdalena, Magdalena!" he cried, with anguish in his voice. "For God's sake, come back! These are our brothers! Each one has been ransomed at the cost of Our

Lord's own blood. . . . " She returned, and conquered once and for all the revolt of nerves and senses. So, too, from the negroes themselves, Claver *asked;* he not merely *gave* to them. It has been remarked, with true penetration, that the deepest love is indeed thus bold to *ask;* true trust can claim that the beloved shall even suffer. Claver, utterly fixed upon the salvation, not merely the material well-being, of his negroes, never forgot for one moment the spiritual cancer of sheer sin, and begged of these men and women, on whom the hand of all visible creation lay so heavily, deliberately, not only to repent, but to exact of themselves punishment for their offences. These, universal Conscience told them, they had offered to God's Law, and, now that they knew Christ's, to His. Not then to his work, not to his friends, not to himself in any form, did he wholly abandon his Self; there was ever an innermost place, where Claver's soul lived " alone with the Alone," and was in solitude.

I have insisted thus on the nature of the loneliness which, in Claver's case, became so visible in his last years, because, humanly speaking, it was a poignant and pathetic thing, and, perhaps, a downright tragedy; while supernaturally it was not just that. But since no Christian is only natural, nor

only supernatural, tragedy and triumph were here, as elsewhere, blended; and Claver's dying was at once sad and glorious. Christian ascetics are not of those who hold it best that a man should have no friends. "He travels the fastest who travels alone" is a very cynical refrain. Christ, when He comes as Lover, does not wish to *oust* those who, when His love has really triumphed, will never be His rivals. We are all His Body. He does not wish, in order that one part may be conscious of His Life within it, that all the rest should be as it were anæsthetized. Jesus loved Lazarus; and Mary, precisely because of her unique relation to her Divine Son, is no merely *official* Mother to his brethren. Claver, when fellow-humans crowded his life, *felt* love and pity for them, though, if he did not, he would disregard that absence of these emotions, and rely wholly upon the *will* he had towards the unsensed Innermost immanent in men. But in any case he knew that individual after individual must pass. Even those who had meant to him something special, must fade, when the throngs were so enormous. The day would be bound to come, he might know, when this face or that, this name or that, so significant to-day, would have disappeared from his human memory, grown overcharged. Never mind;

these he would rediscover in that eternity into which he was enabling them to cross their shadow-world. Meanwhile he was, too, learning how independent is the deepest love of any material expression! Once reality has encountered real reality, the contact has become vital and souls have chemically, so to put it, fused. Who has not found that precisely the profoundest friendships grow to be well free of need for much mere intercourse? Not presents are necessary to be links; not letters, not much meeting; no declarations, no vows. Against each proverb, even, of our race, its opposite may almost every time be set; and whoso argues that to be out of sight is to be out of mind, to him another will retort that absence makes the heart grow but the fonder. Thus even the radical, instinctive wisdom of the multitude corrects itself, and rises higher by means of its own half-truths. Experience agrees: meetings between old friends, elaborately engineered, plotted with much determination that every drop of sweetness shall be extracted from these hours of perfect human happiness, are apt to prove fiascos. A consciousness of self, an artificiality, spoils what is only perfect when it is vital and too deep for explicit statement in thought or word. Hence, in his solitude, Claver, even

humanly speaking, need not be bitterly commiserated. There was no heart-break there; no final disillusionment; no bitterness of sterility; no sickening emptiness at the innermost.

And if souls exist, in truth, outside of time and space, in some manner, not to be imagined or stated by our thought or language, Claver, even though still the victim of those barriers, had with him the presence of those, even, who, as century follows century, he still makes to love him.

Suddenly, a rumour began to spread that Claver was dying. In the midsummer of 1654, the old man declared that his end was nearly come. He fixed it for a feast of Our Lady. Fr. Diego de Farina arrived in Cartagena, and was publicly announced to be Claver's successor in the negro apostolate. Definitely, therefore, he felt himself freed. Just able to walk, he dragged himself to Farina's room and fell at his feet to kiss them, welcoming the man who was giving him thus the right to leave. He made some final dispositions; and at last, on hearing that the Government had ordered the demolition of that part of the old College which contained his room, replied serenely that it did not matter; he would neither see the destruction of the house he had learnt to love, nor be inconvenienced by it. He was

assured that the demolition was to begin on Monday next. It was then Saturday, September 5. He insisted that it would not matter; he had asked Our Lord to spare him this grief, and He had promised.

On the Sunday he was allowed to hear Mass, supported all the while by two negroes. Immediately after it he said he was dying, and asked, as he was being taken through the sacristy to his bed, what the religious, who was there, would wish him to pray for, once he was in heaven. "For Cartagena and the College," was the reply. He promised that he would not forget.

That evening his temperature was high. The Rector talked of the Last Sacraments. Claver said nothing would happen that night. He preferred to await the morning. Early on the Monday, the hammers of the workmen could be heard. Claver remained serene. They would not reach his room before the end should have come. Indeed, he lapsed soon into unconsciousness, and in that state received Extreme Unction.

Already around the dying man a pillage was in process. There was little enough in the room; but what there was, was already filched for relics. And, before an hour had passed, the College doors were besieged by an immense

crowd of functionaries, officials, grandees, ecclesiastics and religious. They beat upon the gates, locked by the Jesuits. The Jesuits refused to open; the doors were burst in. All resistance was swept away by the invading throngs; only one cry was heard: "We want to see the Saint." The little room was packed with a struggling mob; on the bed lay Claver, impassive, stripped already of everything save his coverlet and his picture of Alonso Rodriguez, which a religious defended, not rarely having to use force. A dense crowd of children filled the streets, refusing to move, and invoking St. Peter Claver. Finally the negroes broke all bounds, and came in a new army, cleaving themselves a road through the children up to the house, and thus to Claver's cell. Only with the greatest difficulty was the house cleared at night. In fact, the room remained full of noblemen to whom permission could not be refused; with them they brought two artists, who set to work on portraits of the dying Saint.

The hideous hours, then, of this night passed by, and for the loneliness of years was substituted this publicity of the one event in which man can in truth have no companions.

Midnight passed; and between one and two o'clock of Tuesday, September 8, the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity, Claver died.

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